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The Courier

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MIGRANTS
Between two worlds

1927 V.7 Physiognomischer Blitz

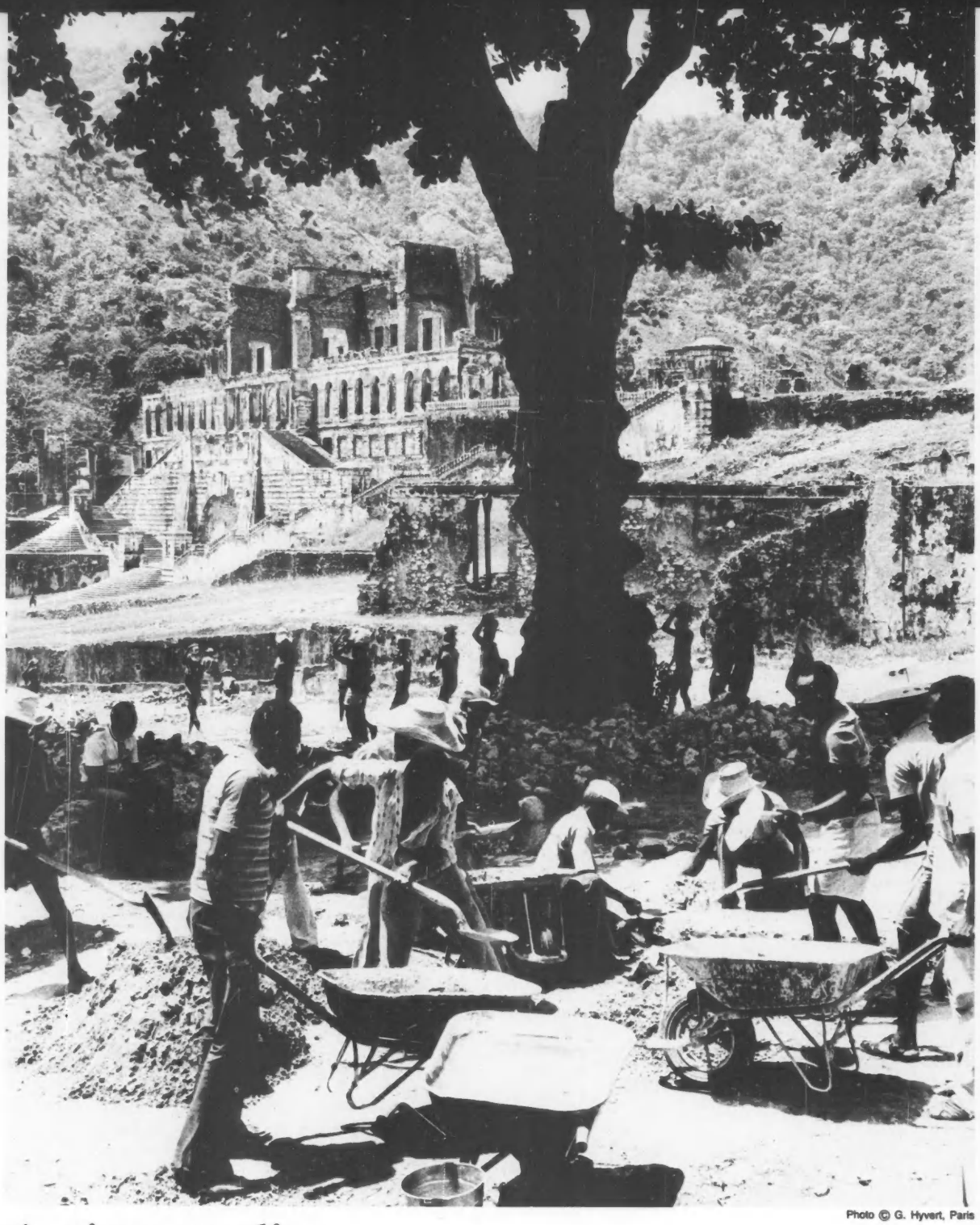

Photo © G. Hyvert, Paris

A time to live...

38 Haiti

The restoration of Sans Souci

Built in the early 19th century by Henri Christophe (1767-1820), who in 1811 proclaimed himself sovereign ruler of the kingdom of Haiti, the imposing palace of Sans Souci is one of the earliest symbols of Haitian independence. The palace, surrounded by gardens which covered 8 hectares at the height of their splendour, was pillaged after Christophe's death, and later seriously damaged in an earthquake. In 1973 Haiti launched an emergency programme to halt the deterioration threatening Sans Souci and other parts of its cultural heritage and to create a national historic park. Today Unesco is co-operating with the Haitian Government on a project, financed by the United Nations Development Programme, to preserve Sans Souci, the Citadel Laferrière, which was built to protect Haiti against attack by colonial forces, and Les Ramiers, a fortification above the citadel. Above, reconstruction work being carried out on the main avenue at Sans Souci in June 1985.

UNESCO
The Courier
A window open on the world

Editorial

FROM the very earliest times, men have moved from place to place. In tribes, clans, families or other groups they fled from natural catastrophes or the horrors of war in search of food, shelter and peace. The human sediments left by the great early tides of migration shaped the face of continents, regions and countries, and in later times, slaves captured by conquerors, refugees from terror, impoverished victims of hard times or systems, all made their contribution to the inexhaustible wealth of universal culture, a whole which is greater than the sum of its parts.

In today's world of societies developing at different rates and separated by growing inequalities, international migrations still obey the imperatives of survival, but more than ever before they are triggered by the need to find work. Millions of persons, obliged to leave their homeland not so much in quest of higher material gain as simply to find a job of any kind, naturally look towards the industrialized countries (where they are assigned tasks which workers in these countries are loath to perform). Legal or illegal entrants, alone or accompanied, they are more intent on an eventual return to their country of origin, than on settling in an adopted country. They live between two cultures, subject to controls which may be legal or arbitrary, sometimes victims of discrimination, aggression or unemployment. They defend their right to earn a living and the right to preserve their identity, or try to adapt to another culture which in turn feels that its integrity is being threatened.

This issue of the *Unesco Courier* reflects Unesco's longstanding interest in certain aspects of the problem of international migration, especially language teaching and vocational training for immigrants and education for their children. The various dimensions of the migration phenomenon in our time underline the complex realities of the problem: the integration of migrant workers in the host society; the reactions of the indigenous population of the host society to the presence of foreigners who are sometimes seen as competitors on the labour market and whose customs are generally ill accepted; the impact of rural-urban migration on the structure and functioning of families left behind; the impact of rigid school systems on the "parallel" culture of the children of immigrants; the problems of readaptation of migrants to their countries of origin when they return after living different lives abroad.

These are some of the many facets of a problem which today is a matter of preoccupation in all countries. It is hoped that analyses of the situation presented here (which even when they underscore its economic and social effects are made from a profoundly humanitarian standpoint) will not only constitute a step forward in understanding this phenomenon but will also contribute eventually to the definition and implementation of appropriate strategies of action which will reconcile respect for the rights and dignity of migrant workers with the legitimate interests of the receiving countries.

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Photo © H. P. Isotton, Switzerland

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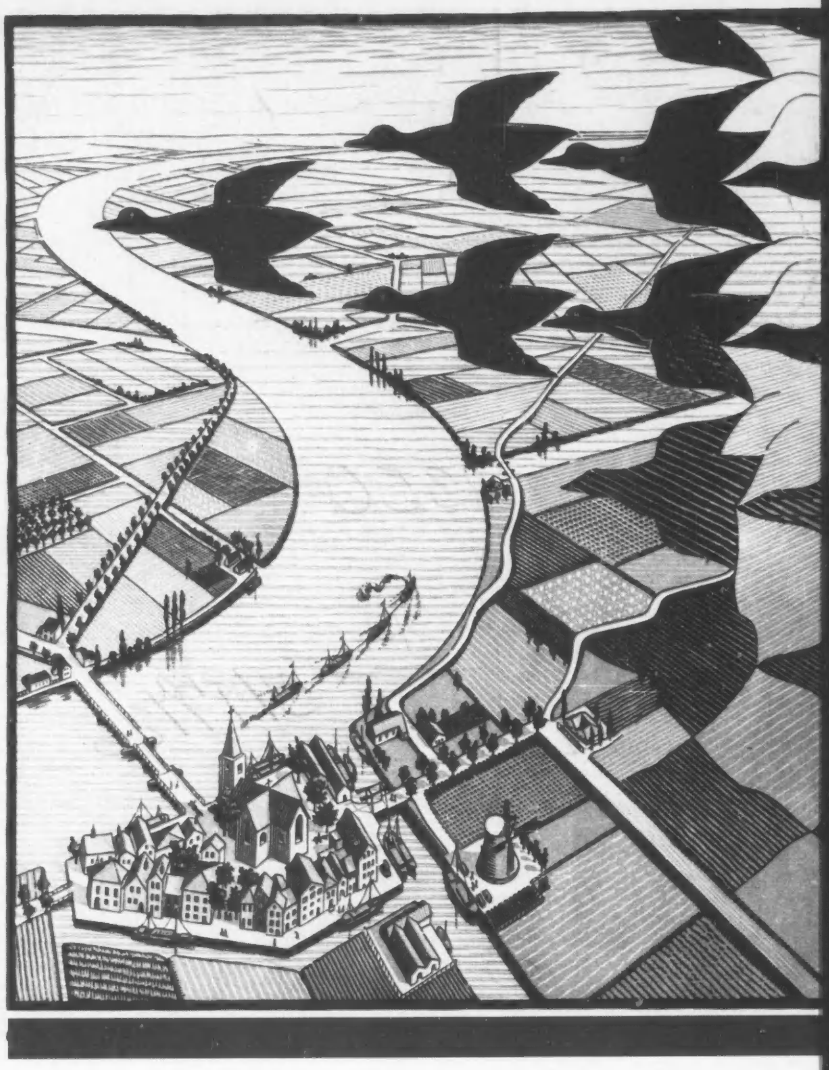
The following article reviews some of the main trends in international migration and in policies relating to them in the decade following 1974 when a World Population Plan of Action was adopted at the World Population Conference organized by the United Nations and held in Bucharest (Romania). It focuses attention on migrations of labour, illegal or undocumented migration, refugee movements and migration for permanent resettlement. The article has been extracted from a United Nations study prepared in connexion with the International Conference on Population, 1984.



Migrant workers: a

IN Europe the virtual stoppage of the recruitment of foreign workers by the industrialized market-economy countries, which was only incipient in 1974, has continued, leading to a net reduction in the size of the foreign labour force still present in the main labour-importing countries, from some 6.5 million foreign workers in 1974 to 6.2 million around 1980.

Since in many of the receiving countries of Europe children born of foreign parents are considered non-nationals, even in the absence of net immigration an increase in the foreign population would be expected because of natural increase. Yet the net gain recorded falls short of natural increase, implying that net emigration has occurred, probably in the form of return migration to the countries of origin.

At present, most of the receiving countries still claim not to be countries of immigration for permanent resettlement. Their policies are aimed, *inter alia*, at stabilizing the size of the foreign population in their territories and at ensuring a certain degree of integration between the foreign minorities and the national majority, while at the same time allowing the former to keep their cultural identity.

Stabilization is to be achieved by promoting the voluntary return to the sending countries of foreign workers and their dependents and by the naturalization of those who are well adapted to their new environment. Integration is to be promoted, *inter alia*, by ensuring parity between foreigners and nationals in such fields as terms of employment, social and health services, and housing, by providing special training (notably in the local language) for workers and their dependents, by combatting discrimination and prejudice against foreigners and by creating an environment conducive to the normal development of family life.

Hence, measures related to family reunion and to the education, training and employment opportunities of dependents of foreign workers are key elements in the promotion of integration. Yet, although immigration for the purpose of family reunification is allowed by all the former labour-importing countries, it is still subject to a number of restrictions and, in general, work permits for spouses and older children are not easily available.

In contrast with the evolution of immigration in Europe since 1974, the oil-exporting countries of Western Asia and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya continued to admit sizeable numbers of foreign workers at least up to 1980. It has been estimated that between 1975 and 1980 the total number of foreign workers in the main labour-importing countries of the region increased from 1.8 to 2.8 million. The total foreign population in those countries was estimated to be 3.5 million in 1975 and is likely to have increased less rapidly than the number of foreign workers since then.

Given the relatively small size of the national populations of the Western Asian labour-importing countries, although the total number of foreign workers present in their territories is smaller than that in Europe, it often constitutes a very large proportion of the local labour force. Partly for this reason, in recent years the receiving countries have tended to adopt measures that regulate immigration and labour recruitment more strictly, that discourage the immigration of family dependents and that enforce, as much as possible, the rotation of labour. These measures include the promotion of such novel labour-importing mechanisms as the so-called "turn-key project" by which a foreign company, contracted to carry out a certain project, provides every input, including the manpower.

Lastly, although data for more recent periods are not yet available, it is likely that the oil glut experienced by the world economy since 1982 and the ensuing decline in oil prices may have had a negative effect on immigration levels to Western Asia.

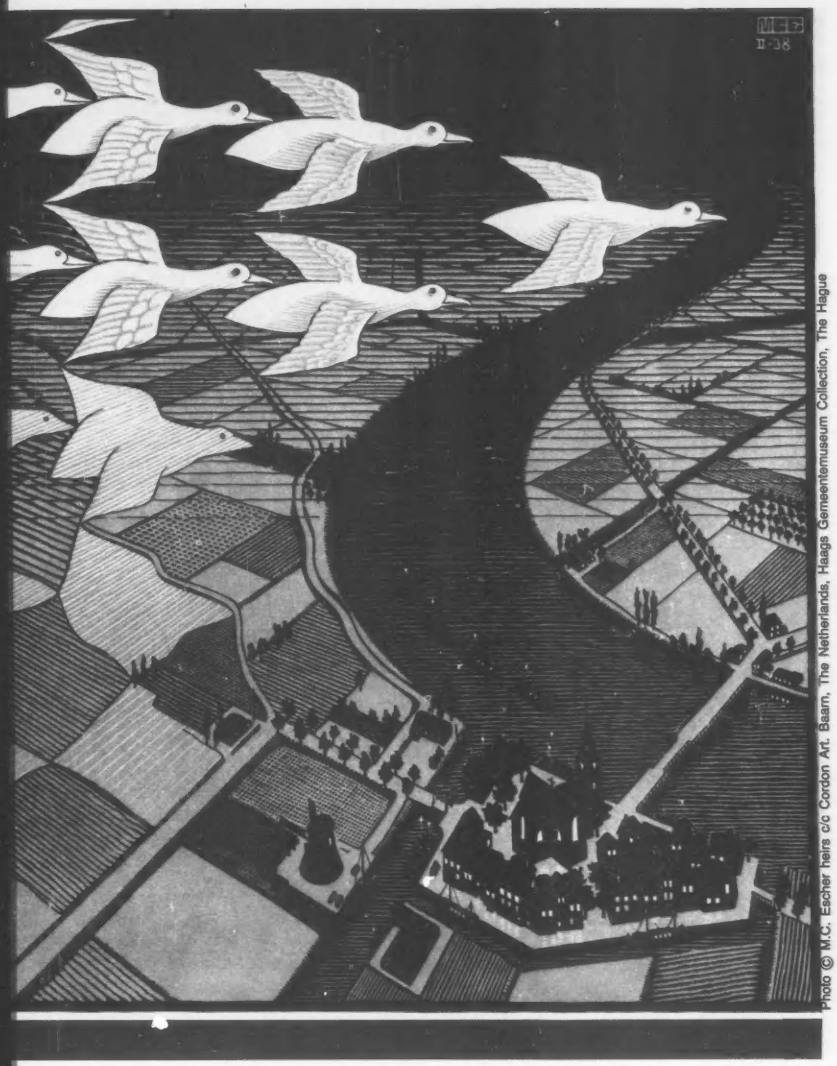


Photo © M.C. Escher heirs c/o Cordon Art, Baarn, The Netherlands. Haags Gemeentemuseum Collection, The Hague

Day and Night (1938), ***a woodcut by the Dutch artist M.C. Escher (1898-1972)***

world phenomenon

In Africa, available evidence suggests that seasonal migration is relatively more common in Western Africa than in other sub-regions and that the Ivory Coast, the Gambia and Senegal continue to attract migrants from neighbouring countries, among which Chad, Ghana, Mali, Togo and Burkina Faso appear to be the main sources of emigrants.

Labour migration is also characteristic of the southern region, where short-term movements (of six to eighteen months duration) of young males to the mines and industrial complexes of South Africa (and until the mid-1970s to Zambia and Zimbabwe) predominate. Yet the level of labour migration to South Africa has declined substantially during the last decade, falling from an annual intake of some 300,000 foreign workers in 1970 to less than 200,000 in 1981. Foreign workers in South Africa are recruited under agreements between the employing organization and the Governments of supplying countries, their repatriation is assured upon completion of the contract period, and while in the Republic they are forbidden to change place of residence or employment.

In terms of policies, few African countries have recognized explicitly a need for foreign labour and even less have adopted measures to promote actively the immigration of foreign workers. In fact, many countries have expressed the desire to become self-sufficient in terms of labour needs, especially in regard to skilled personnel. Yet, as long as needed skills remain scarce, most countries are willing to allow the temporary presence of foreigners having those skills.

Although Canada and the United States are better known as countries admitting permanent immigrants than as importers of foreign labour, they nevertheless admit considerable numbers of persons for temporary employment. Thus, during 1976-1979, the United States admitted an annual average of some 91,000 temporary workers, trainees and exchange visitors (a figure that excludes all immigrants admitted as permanent residents) and in 1981 Canada reported that it had granted about 113,000 work permits, 84,000 valid for less than a year.

In other parts of the continent, legally sanctioned labour migration is the exception rather than the rule. Very few countries have policies that actively promote the immigration of labour. During the 1970s, Venezuela admitted a significant number of migrants for employment, while the Dominican Republic served as host to many temporary workers from neighbouring Haiti. Yet, most of these legally sanctioned flows were accompanied by parallel flows of clandestine migration.

No region of the world is exempt from illegal or undocumented immigration. Economic disparities between countries, coupled with the general tendency of receiving States to restrict the possibilities for legal migration have often given rise to migration flows that are not legally sanctioned by the receiving countries. In the context of the existing world order, where only relatively few countries still encourage or allow immigration, illegal movements are likely to continue.

In the Americas, labour migration flows of considerable magnitude occur, largely without the explicit approval of the receiving States. Illegal or undocumented migration is typical of this region. Although there is little solid evidence on the magnitude of these flows, it seems likely that they have increased during the past decade. Countries such as Argentina, Canada, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Venezuela and the United States have all been known to be the destination of sizeable numbers of undocumented migrants who originate in an ever more varied set of countries.

The policies adopted by countries in this region to cope with illegal immigration cover the full range from *laissez-faire* to ▶

the adoption of regularization drives that aim at legalizing the status of the migrants concerned. Deportation or the "voluntary return" of illegal migrants is the typical mechanism used to control migration, although some countries have also adopted stricter border controls or stiffer employers' sanctions to deter the further illegal influx of migrants tor employment.

Undocumented immigrants are also common in Europe, where the restrictive admission policies adopted since 1973 have led many job seekers either to enter a country illegally or to enter it legally and accept employment illegally. In order to control illegal immigration and prevent its continued increase, the former labour-importing countries have resorted to a wide variety of measures, including more careful border controls, stricter admission requirements, steeper penalties for traffickers and employers of illegal immigrants, and regularization schemes.

It is now impossible to assess reliably either the success of these measures or the current size of the illegal population. It must be noted, however, that immigrants whose status is not legal are not only present in the former labour-importing countries, but also in the traditional countries of emigration. Thus, Greece, Italy and Spain have reported that they are hosting substantial illegal populations, a situation that aggravates the problems these nations face in reintegrating their own returning citizens.

Undocumented aliens are also known to exist in many of the labour-importing countries of Western Asia, where migrants have been attracted by better economic opportunities. In other parts of Asia, economically prosperous States or areas, such as Hong Kong and Singapore, have also acted as magnets for illegal flows, while in certain regions of India economic and political motivations have led to the existence of large populations of migrants whose legal status is now clear.

In Africa, the relatively recent establishment of sovereign States whose boundaries do not always coincide with traditional ethnic divisions has often led to undocumented flows of persons arising from what used to be traditionally unimpeded population movements. In general, policy responses to these movements have been liberal and migrants have been able to stay and work in the receiving country. However, in recent years some States have resorted to deportation measures that often contravene basic human rights.

The importance of refugee movements has increased considerably during the past decade, partly because of the growing number of both countries and persons involved and partly owing to the political ramifications of these movements. While in 1974 the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that there were slightly more than 1.8 million refugees in the world (excluding Palestinians), by the end of 1981 this number had risen to nearly 6.8 million (again not counting the nearly 1.9 million Palestinians overseen by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)).

Given the nature of refugee movements, the figures quoted are only approximate, but they nevertheless indicate orders of magnitude. In fact, the 1981 figure excludes nearly two million refugees who have been permanently resettled in third asylum countries and the many others who have been successfully repatriated to their home countries. Despite the considerable effort made by developed countries in resettling refugees, the vast majority are still being hosted by developing countries which are commonly the countries of first asylum. In Africa alone, the number of refugees increased from one to nearly three million between 1974 and 1981, while in Southeastern Asia by the end of 1981 there still remained about 3 million refugees awaiting resettlement in third countries.

In general, the policies adopted by Governments to deal with refugees have been strongly shaped by humanitarian considerations. In response to the growing number of refugees world-wide, many developed countries have made special efforts to increase their refugee intake. However, since most of these countries have rarely received direct refugee arrivals, their position as third countries of asylum has allowed them to select refugees for admission, with the result that the criteria on family reunification and skills used in the selection have been detrimental to the resettlement chances of the vast majority of refugees who lack family ties in the developed world and are mostly unskilled.

Countries receiving large numbers of refugees directly have resorted mainly to two types of strategy: (a) the creation of "temporary" refugee camps whose basic necessities are satisfied with the help of the international community and (b) the

Major International Labour Migration Flows of the Past 20 Years

Note: All flows are continuing at substantial levels except flows into Europe, Ghana, and Nigeria.

Source: Population Reports, September-October 1983, The Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA

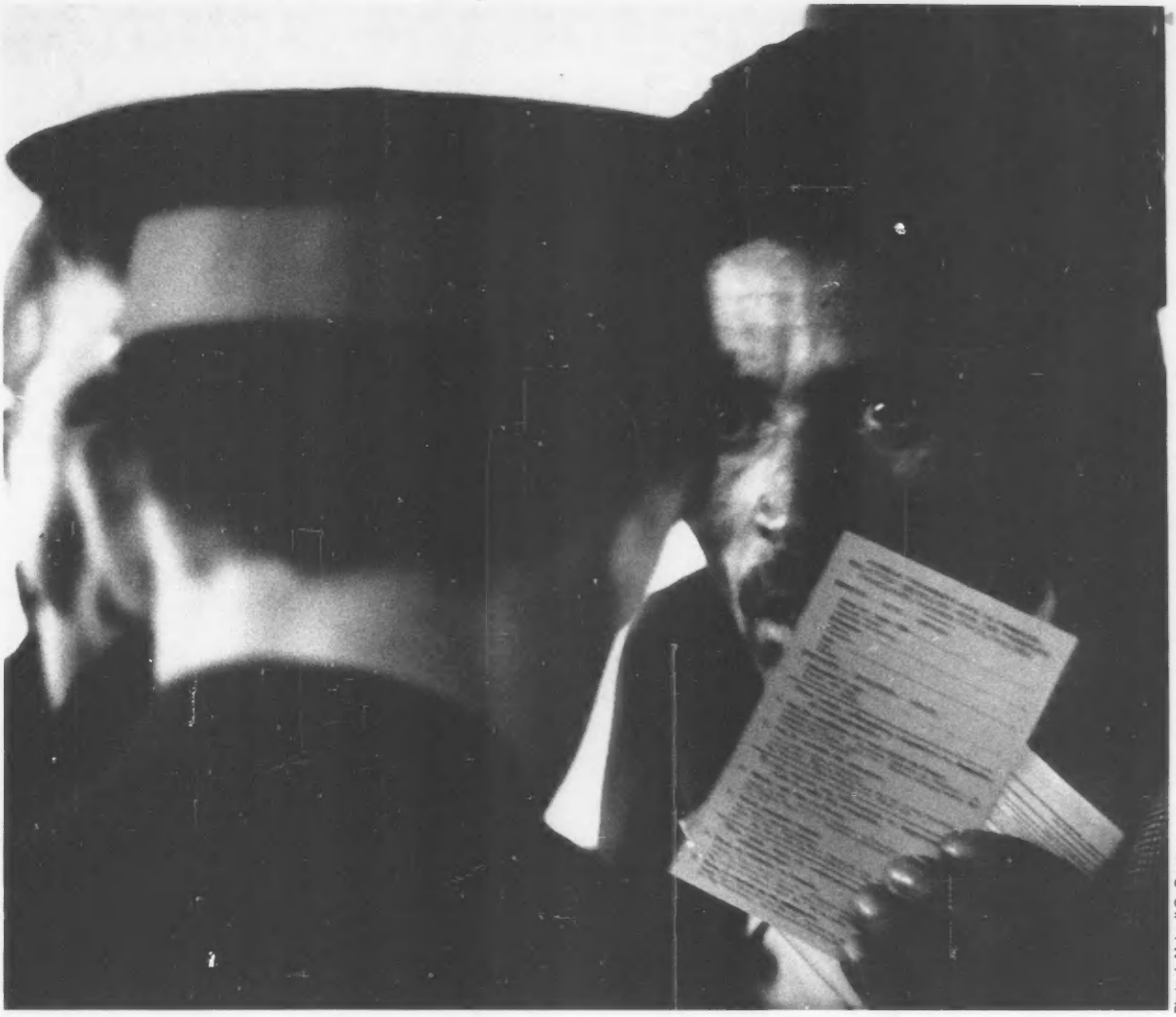


Photo J. Mohr, ILO, Geneva

The decisive moment between past and future, unemployment and work, hope and fear

resettlement of refugees in rural areas where they are provided with land and are encouraged to become self-sufficient. International aid has also been sought in the latter case so as to integrate the refugee in the overall development process. Resettlement strategies have been common in Africa, while temporary refugee camps are typical of Southeastern Asia, a region that has been the main source of refugees for resettlement in third countries.

The role played by the United Nations system in providing aid, safeguarding the physical safety and basic rights of refugees, and working towards permanent solutions to their plight cannot be overstressed. UNHCR has been successful not only in eliciting support for resettlement programmes, but also in aiding the many thousands of refugees for whom voluntary repatriation has been possible. The support of the international community for the activities of the United Nations system in regard to refugees testifies to the importance of these activities and highlights their continued necessity.

Finally, regarding migration for permanent resettlement, mention must be made of the recent trends in migration to and from the traditional countries of immigration: Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States. During the decade 1971-1981, only in the United States did immigration levels grow steadily (largely because of the admission towards the end of the decade of sizeable numbers of refugees, an immigration category that is not yet subject to quotas).

The recent adoption by Australia, Canada and New Zealand of new immigration laws that allow a better adaptation of immigration levels to national needs led to a reduction in the number of admissions, in spite of the larger intake of refugees that they all approved. In fact, the data on emigration from New Zealand reveal that the country experienced a negative migration rate during 1976-1980. These developments suggest that, in terms of the traditional countries of migration, the number of places available for future migrants are not likely to increase. ■

Source : *Review and Appraisal of the World Population Plan of Action*, United Nations document E/CONF.76/PC/10, 2 December 1983.

A challenge for the schools

by Georges Vignaux

THE place where, essentially and historically, necessary change occurs is the school. That is where migrant children are subjected to their crucial first experience of adjustment to a different culture and, conversely, where the children of the host country come into contact with their otherness and their differences, which prompts them to reconsider and to understand their own culture.

Many conflicts can arise in the migrant child as a result of minority practices that can identify him and make him visible as a member of another community (clothing, diet, personal background, etc.). Unfortunately, certain underlying cultural assumptions will then act as kinds of "basic concepts", axiomatizing images of the world, codes and conventions that are legitimated by family consensuses and perceived by the child as being at variance with the very rules, implicit or explicit, of the school, itself the expression of a majority consensus.

But the school is not only the "reflection" of a national consensus; it also aims actively to integrate and cast all children in the same mould. Thus, inevitably, there is often not so much ignorance as rejection of their differences.

Yet each of us, each child, needs these personal and collective differences, if only to locate and perhaps dedramatize his position on a continuum of images, stereotypes and prejudices ranging from the nearest to the most remote. Thus those relegated to the fringes of society draw upon people's attitudes to social relegation—their own and those of others. All these attitudes can only serve to widen the gap between how the child perceives his social status and how he experiences his cultural identity. Thus school can serve as much to materialize these exclusions, by giving them form and typology, as to relativize them. This can happen on two general levels: those of *expression* and *guidance*.

The *acquisition of expression* involves first of all the forced learning of a dominant rhetoric, that of the host country and its language, which is the language of knowledge since all subjects will be taught in it. Very early on, therefore, the migrant child comes to compare two languages: that of the school and that of the family, the latter being necessarily diminished in value relative to the former. In a great many cases this linguistic handicap will be further aggravated by the absence of family support. If the migrant child succeeds in overcoming it, he will have to pay the price in terms of a rift between himself and the family cultural environment, which he will now regard as being antagonistic towards the surrounding model.

With regard to *guidance*, as a result of the standards applied in the school (age-limits, "backwardness", so-called specialist courses etc.), even the best intentions in the world can turn out to be terribly selective here. Teachers and counsellors often arrive at a certain perception of the family and social environment which will lead them to treat the children as special

Young Swedes and the children of Turkish migrant workers learn carpentry in a school at Göteborg, Sweden.

Photo Hervé Gloaguen © Rapho, Paris

In a class comprising 30 per cent of immigrant children in a co-educational State school at La Seyne-sur-Mer in the south of France, an experiment was carried out in 1983 to foster greater mutual understanding among the children and to encourage the young North Africans to take greater pride in the achievements of Arabic culture and language. Combining imaginary and real-life incidents, the pupils wrote a story about their town in French and Arabic and illustrated it with their own drawings and photos.

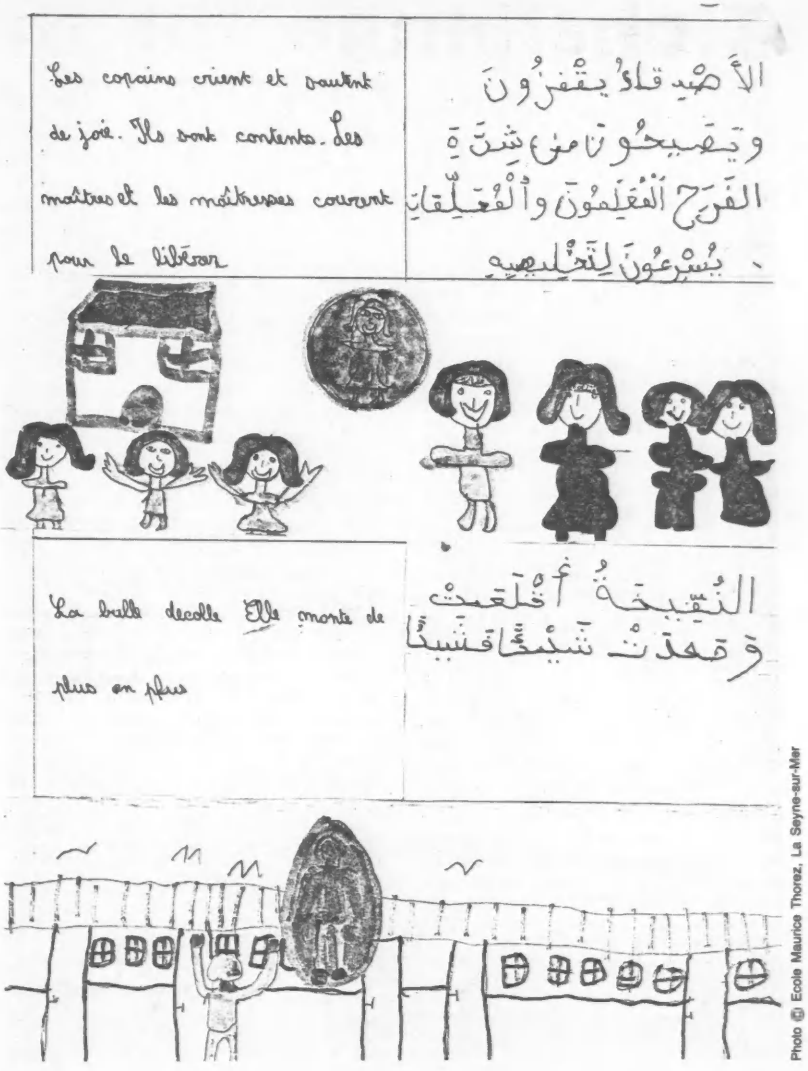

Les copains crient et sautent de joie. Ils sont contents. Les maîtres et les maîtresses courent pour le libérer
الأصدقاء يقفزون وتصيحون من شدة الفرح المعلمون والمعلمات يبشرون لتحريره
La balle decolle Elle monte de plus en plus
النقيبة أقلعت وقعدت شيئا فشيئا

Photo © Ecole Maurice Thorez, La Seyne-sur-Mer

cases. As they are moved from one course to another and from one institution to another they will very soon be victims of relegation, this time to the educational and administrative fringe.

Thus for the migrant child school proves to be essentially a place where differences are recognized, distinctions are drawn and exclusion occurs. The selection systems it involves rely on explanations and, conversely, these explanatory systems, which are gradually internalized by the children concerned, will further the development in them of paradoxical processes of self-selection and self-elimination ("I am not good at school because I am different...and the same applies socially...").

The educational fate of migrant children can thus be sealed as a result of the subtle processes whereby they are transferred to specialist courses, vocational or not, and their concentration in certain establishments. Their place of education is as much a reflection as a result of their physical location within society (overcrowded schools in some urban areas). Thus it might even be claimed that the environment is fully responsible for under-achievement, thereby ignoring the ill-preparedness of teachers for the intercultural problems confronting them.

Every educational institution is based on a profound élitism which can only lead to the exclusion of a substantial percentage of pupils. This fate is, of course, also that of children from the under-privileged sections of the host society, but the consequences are necessarily more serious among migrant children in terms of the ways in which they perceive their own identity. They will resent this selection more than others as a kind of social rejection, a return to the same jobs as their parents or, quite simply, as a sign that they are being consigned to the ranks of the unemployed.

School, which they experience as a place of obligations and constraints, will soon seem alien and even hostile to them because they see it as leading them into a dead end symbolizing a society in which they cannot see their place. Academic failure thus reflects a more general social failure generating strategies of despair.

Cultural dysfunctions gradually engender social maladjustment. "Illegitimate offspring" of a society in which they believe they have no place, from countries which are no longer theirs, these migrant children will then demand the visibility they once feared. Their social dis-identification leads them necessarily to adopt more conspicuous fringe behaviour patterns (formation of minority groups) or to re-identify with a mythical native culture which will never be that of the family. Symbolic crises develop as ethnic aspirations grow. These crises express a search for strategies of self-improvement and self-justification as much as they reflect the failure of integration in a school environment which is not prepared to receive these children with the respect that they and their families want.

The answer lies in educational diversification. Various kinds of culture-based or technology-based courses designed to be equivalent must be grafted onto a common core of basic education. The present mistake of selective streaming, inevitably leading to failure at school and in society, must not be repeated. Hence the importance of a cultural re-moulding of elementary and pre-elementary education.

Teacher training, analysis and thinking about methods must concentrate on these points. All children, not only immigrants, must be offered common educational facilities that will provide them with freedom of choice later on. Recognition of cultural diversity also implies recognition of differences in rates of progress and adjustment and hence a re-evaluation of present modes of enforced "hierarchization" between types of teaching and curricula.

It is thus important that all children should enjoy a free interplay of linguistic expression which is crucial to cognitive, intellectual and, particularly, technical development. In this sense, the establishment of conditions to ensure respect and understanding not only between cultures but also between modes of expression in language, literature and technology, must go hand in hand with efforts to define and develop intercultural education.

No culture can be identified with a closed system of values and behaviour, even if it is necessary, at certain stages of history, for it to act as if this were the case. On the contrary, all cultures can only be nourished by contact with others that are close and by contrast with those that are distant. Schools can help to promote understanding of this "natural" living process. This is, perhaps, one of their fundamental roles. ■

This article is adapted from a report entitled The Education of Migrant Children: Problems and Prospects, *prepared by Georges Vignaux for the 13th session of the* Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, *held in Dublin from 10 to 12 May 1983.*

City lights
The impact of rural-urban migration

THE phenomenon of migration is a major factor in social change. It affects not only those places that receive migrants, but also those that send them. In one type of migration, a member of the family migrates temporarily to a different place, moves between the place of origin and the place of migration, and treats the former as the reference point to which he ultimately plans to return.

Migration from a rural to an urban area, which is usually motivated by the need to find work, makes heavy demands on the members of the family back home. It means that women have to undertake certain tasks they did not previously perform and thus involves a rearrangement of the family time-table. It influences the socialization pattern of children and may result in a series of psychological problems. It affects social life within the family as well as relations outside.

The effect of these changes varies from family to family and from culture to culture. Response to male migration is different in families in which the son has migrated from those in which the father has migrated. In families in which the migrant has the dual status of son and husband the impact of his migration is felt differently.

A cross-cultural study of migration has indicated that migration increases family income, raises the standard of living somewhat and adds in varying proportions to the responsibilities of female family members. Some urban elements enter into the inventory of the material culture of the home.

Contrary to common belief, migration and exposure to modernity may serve to cement the bonds of kinship and to reinforce tradition. It is through the network of kinship that people move into the city and, once there, they continue to move in the kinship and village circle. Back home, the degree of dependence on kinsmen increases with the departure of the male to the town. The authority structure changes very little; the patriarchal ethos is pervasive. Family reunions generally coincide with religious festivals and ceremonial occasions and it is still the husband who takes major decisions or gives the seal of his approval, and in his absence the other senior male members of the family act as guardians.

Such a situation is understandable since migration is a temporary phenomenon that requires only *ad hoc* arrangements. These are all withdrawn with the return to "normality". However, such migration exposes women to a wider world of work and experience in the management of household affairs that are in normal circumstances looked after by men. Longer periods of absence of husbands create a situation in which women begin to assume greater responsibilities and take decisions on matters that cannot wait.

This said, the fact remains that men do not migrate to improve the status of women. They do it for the overall improvement of the family's standard of living and to enhance its status within the traditional structure. Seen in terms of long-term consequences, the suffering due to separation caused by migration is actually an investment made by the parents to provide a better future for their children. The status of the parents may not change much, but their sons may have an education, and thus get a better job, and their daughters may marry well.

Photo © H.P. Isotton, Switzerland

En route for the city. For rural populations the great urban centres hold a natural attraction which is magnified by the hope—sometimes justified—that in the city their menfolk will find work enabling them to improve the living standards of the families they leave behind.

by Yogesh Atal

Migration to metropoli[illegible] centres causes problems both in the cities and in the families that remain in the village. It does not immediately affect the status of migrants. Realizing this and also accepting the inevitability of the pulls and pushes that lead ineluctably to migration, we need to devise a suitable strategy to channel the movement of men. Studies carried out so far suggest that we should think more about the desirability of providing incentives which would keep people in the rural areas, such as the development of large villages or small towns to which people could move, but without moving very far. The process would become decentralized with suitable infrastructures being established in the various regions of a country to ensure the balanced economic growth necessary for the elimination of rural poverty. ■

This text has been taken from the epilogue to *Women in the Villages, Men in the Towns*, a book published by Unesco in 1984 as part of a series entitled "Women in a world perspective".

Photo FAO, Rome

WOMEN ALONE. ***A recent study of Indian rural families from which at least one male had temporarily migrated to Delhi showed that 75 per cent of the families lived principally on remittances received from their menfolk. Most of the cash was used for the purchase of food and clothes; some of it was spent on medicines and the education of male children.***

In California, a wall decorated with stylized designs inspired by pre-Columbian motifs forms the backdrop to a friendly conversation between a young "chicano" and a black boy.

Photo © Vautier-de-Nanxe, Paris

A Unesco approach to international migration

by Ronald G. Parris

INTERNATIONAL migration, whether permanent, temporary or seasonal, legal or illegal, organized or spontaneous, is inherently characterized by varying levels of confrontation between different social systems and cultural traditions and has occurred within differing historical and structural contexts (religious, political, economic, the result of war and natural disasters).

These phenomena have long received the attention of Unesco, beginning as early as 1949 with studies ranging from the question of cultural assimilation and the education and training of migrant workers and their families to the problems associated with their return and re-adaptation to their countries of origin.

Resolution 1.142, adopted at the Seventeenth Session of the General Conference in 1972, called upon Unesco to launch a specific programme of action on behalf of migrant workers and their children. Activities undertaken to implement this resolution have included studies of the various dimensions of migration, wide dissemination of their results and the sponsoring of Meetings of Experts to evaluate these research findings and to offer recommendations for the attention of Member States.

The major orientation of these actions has been that migration should be considered not simply as a labour problem but as a social, cultural and political process of intricate dimensions. One practical objective remains that of encouraging States to choose and implement appropriate policies in the economic as well as political and cultural domains that could lead to the definition of a genuine charter for immigrants. Such a charter could be based on the principle of equality of treatment of immigrants with the local population, while recognizing the relevance of making particular distinctions, where specific needs exist (for example, language and skills training) and the importance of the formation and protection of the cultural identity of individuals and groups as a right.

More recent Unesco programme activities have focused on the education and training of immigrants and the impact of migration on the social structures of selected countries, particularly on racial-ethnic relations. Research has also been undertaken on the patterns and consequences of rural-urban migration in Africa, Asia and Latin America and the mechanisms of adaptation of migrant workers to urban life.

In his everyday life, the experience of the migrant worker is generally one of cultural alienation, isolation, ambivalence and rejection, which forces him into social universes that are generally disconnected and conflictual. The migrant worker is in a "nomansland, which is neither that of his country of origin nor that of his country of employment," resulting often in the destructuring of the very family group and immigrant community that he needs to sustain him. Everyday life is typically organized around two poles: his family and fellow countrymen, in a cultural environment resembling or at least drawing on elements of the culture of the country of ▶

The basis of the apartheid economic system in South Africa is cheap black migrant labour. Millions of Africans are denied the right to live permanently with their families, which are left in the rural areas or Bantustans. Many African children see their fathers only once a year and are brought up by the womenfolk alone. Photo shows a family in the "independent State" of the Transkei in the Republic of South Africa.

Photo Tony McGrath © International Defence and Aid Fund for Southern Africa, London

Photo Laffont © Sygma, Paris

Two young Mexican women illegally cross the Rio Grande del Norte (or Rio Bravo), which forms the frontier with the United States, between Ciudad Juárez in Mexico and El Paso, Texas.

▶ origin; and his work and public life, in a culture unfamiliar to him.

This cultural divergence or dichotomy finds expression in the gradual acquisition by the migrant of two autonomous language tools: the mother tongue, which primarily serves him for private use with family and friends ("language of affect") and a specialized administrative language of the country of employment, devoid of affective connotation and representing "the language of power or domination." Interrelated with this linguistic dichotomy is the division of his daily life into two disconnected universes: the universe of work and that of the cultural ghetto.

The isolation and alienation identifiable in the general migrant population assume even more significance when female migrants are considered. Sex differences, rather than obscuring the alienation the migrant experiences *qua* migrant, tend to exacerbate the problems of cultural adaptation female migrants have to overcome. The reproductive behaviour together with the productive functions of female migrants constitute the core elements of their experiences in the countries of employment and represent the context for assessing the effects of migration on their identity, status and cultural behaviour both inside the family and in the world of work.

The socio-cultural conditions encountered by migrant workers and their families and the patterns of migratory flows themselves take as a point of departure the international economic, political and demographic structures that generate them. These factors include, in particular, the demand in the more industrialized countries for cheap manpower and the need of the labour-surplus countries to sell their labour power. Deteriorating demographic patterns in some of the more industrialized countries also play a role.

It is also important to consider the particular terms and conditions of recruitment and employment of migrant workers (for example, organized bilateral agreements, spontaneous undocumented movements), for these too play a role in the socio-cultural experiences of migrant workers and their families, including their access to the institutions and services of the receiving countries.

For these reasons, the approach to the problem of migration must be holistic. The situation of the migrant worker must be considered in its various dimensions, for his culture, education and training are all interrelated with the economic and political factors affecting his labour or employment, and these, in turn, should be referenced to the racial-ethnic and class systems of the receiving countries. It is necessary to keep in mind the effects of his presence on these systems and the practices and policies employed which, by design or chance, keep him in a state of economic domination and cultural limbo. And when considering the problem at the level of the economy, it could be asserted that migration, whether spontaneous or organized, fails to correct the underlying weaknesses of the socio-economic structures of either the receiving countries or the countries of origin, while remaining a structural component of the world economy.

Institutional discrimination, racial and ethnic prejudice are common features of the societies to which the migrants go. Racial and ethnic prejudice is often manifest in the terms and conditions of entry and in official immigration policies, in the daily practices on the job and in the classroom and in indigenous attitudes and daily contacts between migrant workers and the local population. In some cases, racial strains lead to racial violence. The migrant worker, at first an economic object, soon becomes a racial-ethnic object.

Leaders in the receiving countries, who declare themselves in favour of immigration, so long as it is limited to certain countries of origin, or in favour of extending civic rights and privileges only to those immigrants whose "cultural traditions" more resemble or are more likely to be compatible with their own, hence making these immigrants more assimilable, are, like the more direct opponents of coloured immigration, declaring a case for racism.

Under present conditions of economic crisis and unemployment, many receiving countries re-define the presence of immi-

Photo © AFES 93

With Unesco support, the* Association Africaine des Femmes de l'Espace 93 *at Bobigny in the northeastern suburbs of Paris organizes educational activities designed to encourage the wives and daughters of migrants to participate in the social life of the host community. Dressmaking, sewing, knitting, crochetwork, painting on cloth and dyeing feature among the range of manual activities available. Left, the sewing room. Unesco has offered similar contracts to four migrant workers' associations: two in France, one in Switzerland, and one in Belgium.

grants and migrant workers as threatening the livelihood and survival of the indigenous population or even as an explanation for the economic ills themselves. Greater social controls are usually demanded, including calls for their expulsion and repatriation.

Examples abound everywhere. Recent official policy in Nigeria, after the falling off of oil revenues, has been that of forcible expulsion of immigrants, particularly illicit workers. In France, a political party has been consolidating its political position by associating immigration with unemployment, provoking a vigorous response in the form of an anti-racist movement mobilized under the fraternal slogan *"Touche pas à mon pote"* ("Don't touch my pal") which has been relatively successful in capturing the attention of public opinion and articulating the opposition of diverse groups opposed to racism and the scapegoating of immigrants. The response of Asian and Caribbean immigrants in Britain to racial violence and discrimination has been increased collective organization and participation at the community level as well as a marked involvement in trade union activities.

Finally, what then is the legal status of immigrants and migrant workers in the countries of employment? This is a problem with which Unesco has also been concerned. Experience has shown that like their socio-economic status, their legal status is generally precarious, often depending on the discretionary powers of the administrative authorities. Their legal status could be subjected to reassessment during periods of economic downturn.

This has been the case, for example, with Asian and Carribean immigrants in Britain, where a series of Immigration Acts beginning with the Commonwealth Immigration Act, 1962, have strictly circumscribed the conditions of entry and also the right of admission of family dependents, including spouses. This is true also for some of the labour-importing countries in West Asia, which have instituted their own measures of control. The extension of civic rights to immigrants is closely guarded. The right, for example, to vote remains a controversial point of issue in several of the receiving countries. ■

RONALD G. PARRIS *is a specialist on development in Unesco's Sector of Social and Human Sciences. He is a former professor of sociology at New York University and at Vanderbilt University, and Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at Virginia Union University, in the United States. He is the author of several publications on the problems of migration.*

Migration within Africa

IN sub-Saharan Africa there are two major patterns of international labour migration.

The first and most important is in West Africa, where in nine countries about 2.8 million people were living outside their country of birth in 1975. Long-distance migration in West Africa has a lengthy history, beginning with the movement of entire villages or clans to avoid war or famine. Later, colonists brought labourers, often by force, to Ghana and the Ivory Coast. Now unequal job opportunities within the region, drought, and the open-border policies of most countries sustain voluntary migration. Moreover, with birth-rates now above 45 per 1,000 in all West Africa, the number of migrants is likely to grow. Return migration and circulation among countries is common.

Most of the migrants come from rural areas and the lower-income, land-locked countries such as Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) and Mali. In 1975 as much as 17 per cent of the population of Burkina Faso was living elsewhere. The destinations of the migrants have changed over the last three decades, depending on the relative prosperity of the coastal regions and on their immigration policies. Ghana, the most popular destination in the late 1950s and early 1960s, gave way to the Ivory Coast and Nigeria after the Ghanaian economy deteriorated and, in 1969, the Government expelled all aliens without residence permits. In 1983 there was a similar expulsion from Nigeria.

The other, much smaller migration flow in sub-Saharan Africa is into South Africa. For nearly a century mines in South Africa have recruited workers on short-term contracts from neighbouring countries. The flow of international migrants amounts to about 250,000 a year, and recently the number has remained fairly constant. The origin of the migrants has changed, however, with fewer coming from Malawi and Mozambique and more from Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. ■

Source : Population Reports, Special Topics, Number 7, September-October 1983. Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, USA.

Villagers in Mali making for the town in search of work and better living conditions hitch a ride on a truck laden with calabashes.

Photo P. Pittet, WHO

France

The dilemma of the North African worker

by Abdallah Buhamidi

IMMIGRATION from North Africa to France is nothing new; it started with the men who came to fight with the French forces in the First World War. But the biggest influx took place more recently and dates back some thirty or forty years.

Most of the immigrants came after the Second World War, to help rebuild the French economy. They provided manpower that was plentiful, adaptable and cheap; the problem of social and cultural adaptation did not arise.

Neither they nor their French hosts envisaged long-term coexistence. The French economy was interested in these men and women solely as a source of labour, and the immigrants intended to go back home as soon as they had saved enough to give their families, which most of them had left behind, a better life.

Today this may still be the case for some 600,000 immigrants whose families have remained in their country of origin. But for the majority, the situation is no longer entirely the same, even though most of them have not abandoned the idea of going back one day.

In fact a number of recent developments are causing immigrants from North Africa to reconsider the question of going home. As a result of the economic crisis they are victims of unemployment. The current difficulties on the labour market are hitting them harder than the indigenous population or even other immigrant groups.

Except when the work to be done is arduous, dangerous or dirty, immigrant workers are the last to be hired. However, when firms run into difficulties, reorganize, and decide to reduce their workforce, they are also the first to be fired, unless they are offered the chance of taking early retirement, possibly accompanied by a financial inducement to return to their country of origin.

For the present crisis is not merely short-term or cyclic. It affects the country's economic structures, which are having to be adapted to meet the demands of foreign competition. The necessary modernization calls for technological competence of the highest order. The days of unskilled labour, however cheap, are over.

Furthermore, many of the first arrivals have now reached the age of retirement (early or otherwise), and for them the problem of going back home is compounded by the question of their children and their children's future. For the fact is that, although many have never abandoned the idea of returning home, they have always postponed it until their children—who were either born in France or came as soon as their father was in a position to give them a home—finished their education.

As they grew up in France, these children acquired attitudes, modes of thought and a way of life that have made most of them foreigners in their country of origin, to which they would find it extremely difficult to adapt. The parents too, while they are foreigners in France, have also gradually become foreigners in their own country.

In such conditions, is it possible to go back?

The experiences of people who have made the attempt are very instructive, although they are so recent that it is difficult to draw any general conclusions from them.

Readaptation to the country of origin is not a simple matter, either for those who have made a success of their return or for those who have encountered difficulties, especially since the "returnees" are often ill prepared for the situation.

The most successful cases seem to be those who adapted best to life in France, where they acquired knowledge and vocational skills which made it easier for them to fit back into the social and working life of their country of origin.

It has also been observed that the immigrants' children who have achieved the best results in French schools are those who have maintained the closest ties with their original culture and with the chief vehicles of that culture, their parents. The problem of the social and cultural adaptation in France of North African immigrants and their children is thus closely linked in a complex interaction with the problem of identity.

The children of the Mekong

A quiet street in the Paris suburb of Asnières. A sign above a door bears the unexpected words *"Les Enfants du Mekong" ("The Children of the Mekong")*. The house is a hostel inhabited by some 15 young Asians aged between 16 and 20. During working hours the hostel is empty; everyone is at a literacy class or at school. But in the evening or at mealtimes it is like being in a big family, with Monsieur Péchard the director, whom everyone calls "uncle", Olivier the group leader, who might be an older brother, and the Vietnamese mothers who do the cooking.

"We organize a lot of sponsorship," says Monsieur Péchard. "We give the sponsor the name of a child in a camp in Thailand and he agrees to send that child a small sum of money through us each month. It is also possible to sponsor a young person in France, like the young people in this hostel, either by paying for all or part of his keep or, preferably, welcoming him into the family at weekends or on holidays. All degrees of participation are possible."

In this way whole families are welcomed by specially formed groups, often in a parish, a movement of some kind, or a school. Some try to find housing for these families, others help them with scholastic formalities or teach French to those who have just arrived. A whole network of solidarity is being created in which each person does what he or she can. ■

Source : *Peuples du Monde* Nº 184, Paris, June 1985.

Photo Jacques Haillot © *L'Express*, Paris

Painter Rachid Khimoune's interest in Arabic calligraphy and geometric manhole cover designs has inspired an unusual artistic experiment. He makes casts of the covers and reproduces them on large canvases into which he incorporates pages of writing. "The street is the immigrant's lot," he says. "I find the same arabesques there as I do in Muslim art."

Photos Jean-Pierre Couderc © *L'Express*, Paris

"He is the son of immigrants, adrift between two cultures, two histories, and two languages... inventing his own roots, forming his own attachments,"* wrote Algerian writer Mehdi Charef in his novel Le Thé au Harem d'Archi Ahmed, *which he successfully adapted for the screen in 1984. Cultural ambivalence can be a bitter experience for second-generation immigrants, banishing them to the fringe of two worlds, but it can also be a source of creativity. Novelist Leila Sebbar, above, is the daughter of an Algerian father and a French mother. She draws inspiration for her work in the confluence of two rich civilizations.

Photo Jacques Haillot © *L'Express*, Paris

"In the past we thought of going back to Algeria one day. Now we know we'll stay here," says sculptor Mohand Amara. Going back was once the dream of many immigrants, but is it possible for their children? Many immigrants are only partially integrated in the host society, but no longer feel they belong in their society of origin, which also regards them as outsiders.

Integration difficulties were a logical result of living in a community which was regarded solely as a source of labour and which was relegated to the fringes of the host society and its culture. Integration was not encouraged. Apart from these difficulties, the problem of the adaptation of North African workers was distorted by an enormous misunderstanding which transcended the simple question of adopting the laws and customs of the host country and which made any possible integration dependent on repudiation of one's self.

The values so dear to North African immigrants and their culture, perceived in France in terms of clichés divorced from the historical context common to the two shores of this part of the Mediterranean, had no chance of asserting themselves against those of the host country.

The rejection of certain forms of expression of this immigrant community has been attributed to the fact that Arab Muslim culture is very different from European culture. This explanation is not fully satisfactory, since in other circumstances the two cultures have several times proved to be fully complementary and perfectly compatible.

At a very early stage, the values of which the parents were the bearers were rejected not only by the host society but also by their own children, who attributed their difficulties to their cultural identity and therefore to their parents.

Through the school and the acquisition of a working knowledge of the language, even the less gifted children soon gained access to a code for understanding the host society which was a closed book for their parents, who thus lost their status as socio-cultural initiators—the basis of their authority and its "legitimacy".

Because of their ambiguous attitude to their own identity, the parents contributed involuntarily to the deterioration of their relations with their children. Anxious to resemble the dominant model through the educational and social success of their children, they overvalued that model to the detriment of their own cultural values, to which their children should have referred.

Caught up in this contradiction, the children harboured a negative image of themselves and linked this disparaged identity with their failure, which they saw as predordained. This situation created conflict within the family and jeopardized its cohesion as a group. The father was the first victim and then—by way of reaction— the children, who in such circumstances were bound to do badly at school. In these conditions many young people have rejected their culture of origin, while failing to acquire access to the host culture or to achieve the qualifications necessary to achieve a satisfying social and professional life, still less the integration dreamed of by their parents.

The contribution made to the French economy and culture by immigrants from North Africa has been far from negligible. Thanks to their constant comings and goings between the two shores of the Mediterranean, North African immigrants have become an organic link between France and the Maghreb, participating in the commerce between the two cultures.

Through its contact with immigrant children, the French educational system is re-examining its methods in such a way that many French children, hitherto excluded because of their non-conformism from the traditional channels of knowledge and instruction, will certainly benefit.

Mention should also be made of the growing number of writers and artists (especially musicians, painters and film-makers) whose specific modes of expression are making a mark on French cultural trends.

One of the greatest benefits which France is reaping from the presence of North African immigrant workers is undoubtedly an awareness, still in its infancy, of her pluralistic identity, the source of all her riches, symbolized by the slogan chanted during a recent anti-racist demonstration: "First, second, third, fourth generation, we are all the children of immigrants." ■

ABDALLAH BUHAMIDI, *of Morocco, is a psychologist and guidance counsellor with the Paris-based association* Jeunesse, Culture, Loisirs et Technique. *He is also director of the association's specialized guidance service.*

The Federal Republic of Germany

Integration or repatriation?

by Gisela Apitzsch and Norbert Dittmar

THERE are about 4.5 million foreigners living in the Federal Republic of Germany and West Berlin of whom Turkish nationals form by far the largest group, accounting for 35 per cent of the total.

As a result of the current economic situation the legal requirements affecting foreigners are being applied in a more restrictive manner and this has made their situation more precarious and has also made it more difficult for them to plan for the future. Only a fraction of these migrants enjoy legal security. Although 2.9 million foreigners have been living in the Federal Republic for more than eight years and thus fulfil the most important condition for obtaining a residence permit which would protect them against expulsion in the case of long-term unemployment or dependence on social security, only 3.2 per cent are in possession of this precious document.

In order to clarify the present situation of foreign communities from countries outside the European Economic Community (EEC) in general, and of the Turkish community in particular, it is necessary to retrace the policies concerning foreigners adopted over the past few years.

Uncertainty about the future seems etched into the features of these foreign workers in the port of Hamburg. Facing them was the prospect of massive redundancies in the city's shipyards.

The ban on recruitment of foreign workers decreed in 1973 and a regulation of the *Bundesanstalt für Arbeit* (Federal Institute of Labour), which came into force a year later, concerning the granting of work permits for foreigners stipulated that an interruption of residence in the Federal Republic could result in loss of employment. To avoid this problem many migrant workers tried to arrange for their families to join them in the Federal Republic.

As a result, during the years of economic crisis, the age and employment composition of the foreign population underwent a fundamental change. Whereas the number of foreign workers living in the Federal Republic in 1978 tallied almost exactly with that in 1973, the number of foreigners in employment had actually gone down by

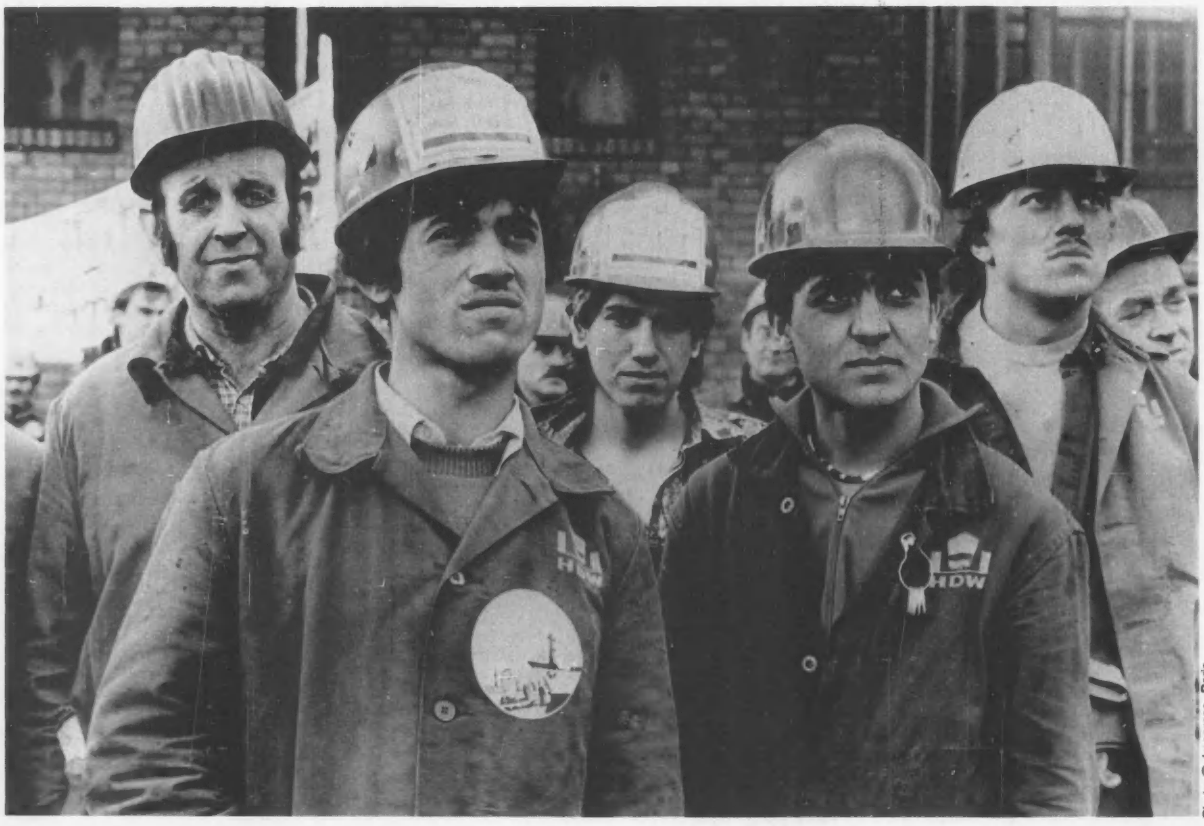


Photo © Imapress, Paris

Photo J. Mohr, WHO, Geneva

Turkish women photographed at the Federal Republic of Germany's recruitment office in Istanbul, before the 1973 ban on the recruitment of foreign workers. Those who spoke German, had a relative working in the Federal Republic or had already worked abroad stood a better chance of getting a job.

28 per cent. The number of children under the age of sixteen increased by about 25 per cent, passing the million mark in 1976.

In the following years the authorities pursued a dual strategy: on the one hand encouraging return to the country of origin, and on the other promoting the integration of migrants. As late as 1978 a practice was introduced whereby foreigners who fulfilled certain conditions, such as having satisfactory living quarters and a basic knowledge of the German language, could be granted an unlimited residence permit after five years of uninterrupted stay and the right of residence after eight years. In 1979 the general ban on employment for spouses who had joined their partners at a later date was lifted in favour of a four-year waiting period. Since then adolescents joining their parents later have usually been granted full access to the labour market after a maximum two-year waiting period— with the proviso that preference should be given to nationals of the Federal Republic and the EEC countries.

These improvements in the situation of the children of immigrant workers were supported on the grounds that their disadvantaged position at school and at work might prove a threat to social stability and that the members of this "second generation" could be considered as a potential source of skilled labour to meet shortages expected in the late 1980s.

1979 was a key year for integration strategies, and a number of in-school and out-of-school training programmes were initiated. Perhaps the most important of these was a programme of *Measures for Job-preparation and Social Integration of Young Foreigners* (MBSE). The MBSE is a full-time, ten-month programme whose primary aim is to provide adolescents with an integrated course combining practical job preparation, language teaching and general education. The vast majority of participants (95 per cent) are Turkish youths. The initial intention was that the programme should be offered nationwide and be extended to offer 20,000 places. However, a continual reduction has taken place since the programme was established in 1980, and in the year 1983/84 only 6,500 adolescents were able to benefit from it.

By the early 1980s, the tendency to regard integration policy as a means of limiting the number of foreigners grew stronger. Opportunities for families to be reunited have been drastically curtailed. Since December 1981 only children below the age of 16 (as compared with 18 previously) have been allowed to join their parents, and a stricter interpretation of the regulations concerning living quarters frequently makes it impossible for married couples or for parents and their under-age children to live together.

One of the basic aims of policies concerning foreigners under the Government's *Urgent Measures Programme* was the facilitation of repatriation. Foreigners from non-EEC countries who left the Federal Republic or West Berlin between October 1983 and September 1984 could ask for 50 per cent of their pension contributions to be paid back to them and the usual two-year waiting period was waived. According to information from the Regional Insurance Offices one-fifth of all Turkish nationals living in the Federal Republic took advantage of this offer even though they lost the employers' contributions and had to forgo all claims on a pension as well as the possibility of returning to the Federal Republic in the future.

Although the Federal Government has an interest in reducing the number of foreigners living in the Republic, the economy is still dependent to a certain extent on foreign workers. They account for 28 per cent of the work force in foundries, 25 per cent in the mining industry, 20 per cent in the textile industry, 16 per cent in the car industry and 14 per cent in the building sector. In these areas, as well as in the artificial fibre industry, in cellulose production and in heating and refrigeration ▶

works, it would be well nigh impossible to replace foreign workers by unemployed nationals of the Federal Republic of Germany, since their qualification patterns are unsuitable.

About half the unemployed nationals of the Federal Republic are qualified in areas in which hardly any foreign workers are employed. Moreover, for health or age reasons, two-thirds of them could not take over jobs with a high level of stress, and one-fifth of them are looking only for part-time employment. Thus, even though many nationals of the Federal Republic consider foreigners to be a contributory factor to the unemployment situation, ousting them from the labour market would in fact do little to improve it.

More than 95 per cent of foreign workers are employed in production (one in six production workers is a foreigner). In West Berlin, where the proportion of foreigners (12 per cent) is higher than anywhere else, one in every four workers comes from one of the former countries of recruitment, half of them being from Turkey. Foreigners also form a high proportion of the work force in towns in the industrial area of the Ruhr and in Frankfurt-am-Main, Offenbach, Stuttgart, Mannheim and Munich.

Foreign workers have been much more badly hit by unemployment than nationals of the Federal Republic. Whereas at the end of 1983 there was a total of 9.5 per cent of registered unemployed, the rate amongst foreign workers was nearer 14.9 per cent. Turkish workers were the most severely affected with an official unemployment rate of 18 per cent.

Foreign families are worried not only about uncertain employment prospects, and consequently about the right of residence, but also about the uncertain future facing their children.

Foreign children form a significant part (845,000) of the school population—one in every twelve pupils is of foreign origin. In towns with a high foreign population some 25 to 30 per cent of the pupils in primary and secondary schools are of foreign origin, with Turkish pupils forming the largest single group (53 per cent).

The opportunities for social progress for these children are minimal—20 to 25 per cent play truant, some 50 per cent of foreign school-leavers fail to obtain a certificate of education, and only very few of them continue their education beyond secondary level.

Since responsibility for education lies with the regions and not with the Federal Government, there is no homogeneous educational policy in the Federal Republic of Germany. Each local authority puts its own interpretation on the guidelines established by the Conference of Education Ministers. Yet despite certain local differences to which this leads, a number of common factors can be observed: the native language and culture of foreign children is hardly taken into account in regular courses and native language teaching rarely figures on the time-table where classes are mixed; there is a shortage of teachers who are adequately prepared for teaching involving foreign children; there is a growing tendency to segregate foreign pupils.

Even though the educational aspirations of foreign pupils have been shown to be no lower than those of nationals of the Federal Republic, 75 per cent of foreign adolescents receive no education beyond secondary level and no specialized job training. Inadequate knowledge of the German language goes a long way to explaining this situation.

However, in order to enable at least the following generations to acquire an emancipated status in their host country and to ensure the peaceful co-existence of members of differing ethnic and cultural backgounds, more must be done than simply to lament migrants' lack of readiness to go through a process of acculturation. What is needed—and this also in the interest of the majority of the population—is a turning away from the employment of foreign workers on the basis of short-term economic interests and a re-thinking of employment policies by those to whom political responsibility is entrusted. ■

GISELA APITZSCH, *of the Federal Republic of Germany, is a research assistant at the Free University of Berlin. She has been engaged in a research programme on "Strategies in Intercultural Communication", and is the author of several articles on the problems of language acquisition and communication among migrants.*

NORBERT DITTMAR, *of the Federal Republic of Germany, is professor of sociolinguistics and second-language learning at the Free University of Berlin. He is the author of several publications, including* Sociolinguistics, A Survey of Theory and Methods *(1976). He is currently engaged in a project on cross-linguistic second-language acquisition by Italian, Polish and Turkish migrants.*

A "mixed" class of Turkish and German children at a school in Duisburg, in the Federal Republic of Germany

Photo © Joachim Schumacher, Essen

Photo C. Steele-Perkins © Magnum, Paris

Indian workers in a garment factory in Wolverhampton, England

United Kingdom

The struggle against discrimination

by Robert Miles

THERE has been an Asian and Caribbean presence in Britain for several centuries, reflecting British colonial history. Many British towns and cities, particularly seaports, contain Asian and Caribbean communities which have been established for three generations or more. Their origin often lies with travelling salesmen from the Indian sub-continent or with seamen recruited in the colonies. These communities formed the base for the migration that developed in the 1950s in response to the demand for labour in certain sectors of the British economy. As happened elsewhere in Western Europe after 1945, the expansion of the capitalist economy exhausted the supply of labour within the national boundary and employers were forced to recruit workers from elsewhere.

The majority of those recruited after 1945 were from colonies and ex-colonies, and they arrived in Britain with British citizenship. Comparable circumstances existed in the case of certain migrant groups to France and the Netherlands. These colonial migrants arrived with the right to settle and work, and with full political and civil rights. However, this position of legal equality has not led to their attaining a position of economic and social equality with the indigenous population.

Most New Commonwealth migrants who came to Britain before 1965 did so in order to fill positions in the labour market vacated by indigenous workers. These were mainly manual jobs, and particularly semi- and unskilled manual jobs. They were also often low-paid and involved poor working conditions and/or shiftwork. Migrants were concentrated in textiles, food production, automobile construction, metal manufacture, transport and the National Health Service. ▶

▶ Although the majority of migrants in this early period were men, the migration from the Caribbean did include a large proportion of women who came in order to work in their own right. Since the mid-1960s, almost all the New Commonwealth migrants have been the wives and children of those who came in the earlier period, and many of them have entered the labour market as is their right.

Thus, in 1981, 89.9 per cent of Caribbean men of working age and 69.9 per cent of Caribbean women were employed, compared with 90.6 per cent of indigenous men and 63.5 per cent of indigenous women. The respective figures for Asian men and women were 85.6 per cent and 41.4 per cent. The much smaller proportion of Asian women employed is partly explained by cultural factors.

The position of these migrants in the labour market in the 1980s has not changed noticeably from the situation that existed during the early period of the migration. A national survey published in 1984 showed that, amongst the indigenous male population, 42 per cent were employed in professional and non-manual occupations, and 58 per cent were employed in manual work. The respective figures for Asian men were 26 per cent and 73 per cent, and for Caribbean men, 15 per cent and 83 per cent.

Concerning manual work, men of Caribbean and Asian origin remained over-represented in semi- and unskilled jobs, compared with 16 per cent of indigenous men.

Workers of Caribbean and Asian origin in Britain are, therefore, predominantly manual workers and are significantly over-represented in semi- and unskilled manual work. The migrant of the 1950s was recruited to these positions. But an explanation is required for the fact that migrants and their British-born children remain largely confined to these same sectors. Language problems have not been irrelevant, and some of the migrants lacked formal qualifications, but these factors less easily explain the position and experience of the migrants' children.

In the case of the latter, the question of achievement within the British education system arises, especially for West Indian boys. Yet even where people of Asian and Caribbean origin speak good English and have equivalent qualifications, they are commonly employed in inferior positions. A number of studies conducted since the mid 1960s have shown that discrimination plays a crucial role in determining their position in the labour market, despite the fact that such discrimination is illegal.

West Indian and Asian migrants and their children (particularly young men of Caribbean origin) have been particularly vulnerable to unemployment. In the early 1960s, unemployment amongst New Commonwealth migrants was higher than amongst the indigenous population, but it fell during the 1960s, with the exception of the recession of 1967/68, and by the end of the decade was at about the same level.

Photo Martine Franck © Magnum, Paris

Audio-visual aids are used to help these Pakistani children learn English at their school at Bradford in northern England.

Photo Leonard Freed © Magnum, Paris

A Bangalee mother in London takes an English lesson in her home.

However, over the past fifteen years, unemployment amongst both migrants and their children has increased faster than amongst the indigenous population. Within the Asian and Caribbean populations, unemployment rates have been even higher for young West Indian men and for Pakistani and Bangladeshi women. The aforementioned 1984 study showed that 25 per cent of Caribbean men and 16 per cent of Caribbean women, and 20 per cent of Asian men and women were unemployed, compared with 13 per cent of indigenous men and 10 per cent of indigenous women. In the 16-24 years age range, 44 per cent of Caribbean men and 38 per cent of Caribbean women, and 30.5 per cent of Asian men and 38.5 per cent of Asian women were unemployed, compared with 26 per cent of indigenous men and 20 per cent of indigenous women.

This higher level of unemployment is due in part to the fact that Asian and Caribbean workers are over-represented amongst those engaged in semi- and unskilled manual work for low wages. People doing these jobs are more likely to become unemployed, partly because it is these sorts of manual jobs that are increasingly being replaced by machinery. But this is far from being the only factor.

Asian and Caribbean people are more likely to be unemployed whatever their job level, and they are also more likely to be unemployed due to dismissal from work. These facts suggest that discrimination is an important part of the explanation.

Discrimination confines migrants to particular positions in the hierarchy of wage labour, but in a way which is not always evident to the victims; studies show that people of Asian and Caribbean origin underestimate the extent of discrimination against them. Moreover, immigrants are also subjected to incidents of violence. A Home Office report published in 1981 concluded that there was a minimum of 7,000 attacks a year and that people of Asian origin were fifty times more likely to be the victim of an attack than people of European origin. People of Caribbean origin were thirty-six times more likely to be victims of such attacks. The research team concluded that "It was clear to us that the Asian community widely believes that it is the object of a campaign of unremitting racial harassment which it fears will grow worse in the future". These attacks take place in certain urban areas, especially in the big cities.

The vast majority of colonial migrants to Britain and their British-born children are part of the working class. In many respects they share all the disadvantages and problems of the working class, and they are involved in traditional forms of working class political organization and behaviour. Overall, workers of Asian and Caribbean origin are more likely to belong to a trade union and to vote for the Labour Party than are indigenous workers. They have also played a prominent part in trade union struggles, although the trade unions themselves are often characterized by discriminatory practices against immigrants. The political consciousness of these workers overlaps to a significant extent with the political consciousness of the rest of the working class.

The activities of self-help groups, community schools, parents' groups concerned with their children's experience in the education system, self-defence groups and many others are all part of the complex political reaction of colonial migrants and their children to the specific problems that they face in Britain and are an important part of the continuing struggle for racial equality there. ■

ROBERT MILES, *of the United Kingdom, has been lecturer in sociology at the University of Glasgow since 1978. He is the author or co-author of several publications including* Labour and Racism *(1980),* Racism and Migrant Labour *(1982), and* White Man's Country: Racism in British Politics *(1984).*

North America
Men for all seasons

by Anthony P. Maingot

THE history of the exploitation of migrant workers in general and in North America in particular is too well known to warrant repetition. It has provided the plot of more than one major novel and the workers' plight has been portrayed in all its pathos in more than one film. That plight tends to be a combination of substandard wages and living conditions and a high degree of job insecurity. More often than not these conditions have been associated with the agricultural sector in labour-intensive agro-industries.

Because such substandard programmes continue to exist it might be good to look at some cases where the use of migrant labour in agriculture has worked well for the migrant, his family and community as well as for the employer. It might be possible to derive some lessons from a review of such cases. It is fortunate, therefore, that we now have good data on two agricultural programmes utilizing migratory labour, one in the State of Florida and the other in Canada.

The 8,000 migrant workers in the Florida sugar industry are in a way all that is left of the original *bracero* (strong arm) programme that started in 1942 and at its height brought more than 420,000 workers, mostly Mexican, to work in US agriculture. Only one part of that large migrant worker scheme of the 1940s remained intact: the so-called H-2 programme (from the category of visa granted to temporary workers) bringing British West Indians to work in the Florida sugar cane industry. Established in 1943, it continues up to today. The story of the success of this H-2 programme is the story of a felicitous match between nature and economic circumstances in Florida and the cultural orientations of British West Indians.

Florida cane is grown under conditions which do not allow full mechanization. Such a cane culture is not suited to the use of cane cutting machines; it needs skilled and dependable manual labour. Here nature shapes economics, for if a machete-wielding man in Florida is to compete with a harvesting machine in Hawaii, he has to be skilled. But cutting cane manually is nasty, back-breaking work that no

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West Indian Immigrants in Canada

WEST Indians who migrate to Canada today are generally better educated than their predecessors and more at home in modern metropolitan communities. However, in spite of the fact that most of them come from the countryside and small towns and have no experience of big city life, they do not go to the rural areas of Canada. They are attracted to the large urban centres of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver.

Having left their native land for economic reasons, and with the expectation of economic advancement in their adopted home, they are ill-prepared to face the reality of Canadian attitudes towards immigrants. But West Indians, as well as facing the same problems as immigrants of whatever race or origin, are also victims of greater hostility because of their colour, especially when they try to obtain housing and employment. Having experienced a marginal existence in the West Indies, and finding that his basic cultural and human values are not recognized in Canada, the West Indian immigrant often experiences serious identity problems.

Attempts by West Indians to be accepted through adapting themselves to the dominant culture have, with few exceptions, not succeeded. Many West Indians are actively participating in movements which are seeking to change the present situation in which they face varying degrees of prejudice and discrimination. These individuals and groups are joining forces with Canadian-born blacks, South Asians and other disadvantaged group in an effort to eliminate discriminatory practices which restrict their full participation in Canadian society.

The Haitian community in Quebec constitutes a special case in this respect. First of all it has to face the problem of illegal or clandestine immigrants who wish to leave Haiti at all costs and cannot receive aid from the Government when they arrive in Canada.

In the early 1960s, the Haitian diaspora consisted of highly educated individuals, mostly professional people, until the political situation in Haiti gave rise to an entirely different kind of exodus, especially from the rural areas of the country. In addition, because of their physical characteristics and the African sonority of their mother tongue, the Haitians quickly form a group which the officials of the Immigration Ministry describe as "visible". So far, however, Haitians have not sought to confine themselves to a ghetto or to form groups centred on immigrant associations.

The evidence suggests that the Haitians have not encountered major obstacles to their adaptation to the society and culture of Quebec either from the two national majorities or from the other groups, in spite of the universal feeling that the "Creoles" are going through a difficult period in Quebec. A "third culture" is beginning to emerge in the Haitian community, a kind of intermingling born of the social differences between young Haitians and their contemporaries in Quebec. This third culture is formed largely of disparate, anarchic elements, taken at random from American and English-speaking West Indian "negritude". It can easily be imagined that such influences, added to the pronounced oral character of Haitian culture may separate the young generation from the main trends and currents of life in Quebec and create an impression of lack of commitment and marginalization. ■

Sources : "The West Indian Family in Canada: Problems of Adaptation in a Multiracial, Multicultural Society" by Wilson A. Head, in *Multiculturalism*, vol. III No. 12, 1979; and "Questions de Culture: Migrations et Communautés Culturelles, Institut Québecois de Recherche sur la Culture.

Photo Maud © Afrique Photo, Paris.

one in the world engages in unless the rewards are real, as indeed they have been.

To be sure, the major element of this reward is monetary—the difference between what the workers make abroad and what they would have made staying home. But there is another incentive which explains the popularity of the H-2 programme: the worker is not locked into the "cane culture", i.e. the complex and demeaning life style associated with the sugar plantation which affected not just the worker but his whole family. Certainly the companies' stance toward labour reflects self-interest, not altruism nor a particular fondness for West Indians.

Here again the reason for the situation is economic, since the traditional source of abundant and thus cheaply available labour does not exist. It has not been difficult, therefore, for the U.S. Department of Labor to provide certification for this programme: every effort to recruit local labour has so far failed. This is where both economics and culture come in, because the necessary labour is available in the West Indies where migration and work abroad have long been integral parts of the area's cultural orientations.

An interesting cultural aspect of this migration is that even before the dawning of the trade union movement West Indians tended to organize for improvement. Today these workers who come for the five-month season are represented through their union, the British West Indian Central Labour Organization. Additionally, being citizens of small but proudly democratic States such as Jamaica, Barbados, and St. Vincent, they possess the advantage of having the support and vigilance of their Governments which, no doubt, are keenly aware of the contributions the earnings of these workers make to the balance of payments and hard currency situation.

The joint effort in favour of workers' rights has paid off. Apart from subsidized room and board, they get a 50 per cent subsidy for travel to the job, and upon completion of contract, free travel back. Workers receive a medical exam before travelling, and are covered by their own group hospitalization insurance as well as State-mandated workers' compensation for job-related injuries. The goal in negotiating these subsidies is of course to fulfil the whole purpose of migratory work: sending much of the earnings back home.

In a fundamental way, work in the Florida sugar industry helps to reinforce their status back home rather than replicating the terrible wastage of human lives so typical of the history of the sugar plantation.

An interesting comparison can be made with West Indian farm workers in Canada, where the programme was established much later than in the USA. First came the Jamaicans in 1966, followed in 1976 by workers from the eastern Caribbean and Mexico. By 1982 there were some 6,000 working on fruit, vegetable and tobacco farms. Over half of these were Jamaicans. In Canada as in the United States the economic rationale is the same: the inability to recruit sufficient native workers.

As distinct from Florida, however, where only eight large growers are involved, in Canada the farm workers deal with small farmers; in 1982, 782 employers participated. The hourly wage in 1983 ranged from $3.50 to $4.80 per hour. As in the case of those going to Florida, nearly all had jobs back home when recruited. However, those going to Canada tend to come from a different labour pool: over half were skilled or semi-skilled workers.

As is to be expected, West Indians indicate that they travel for the increased pay, yet fully 22 per cent of those in Canada indicated that they had travelled for the experience of being overseas.

Although clearly a very small part of the overall flow of migrant farm workers, especially into the United States, the cases described illustrate the fact that this type of work does not have to be exploitative and degrading to the workers to be beneficial to the employer. Work in agriculture does not have to be associated with the wasting "plantation syndrome." ■

ANTHONY P. MAINGOT, *of Trinidad and Tobago, is professor of sociology and director of the graduate programme in International Studies at Florida International University, Miami, USA.*

Photo © Bernard Gérard, Paris

BETWEEN TWO CULTURES

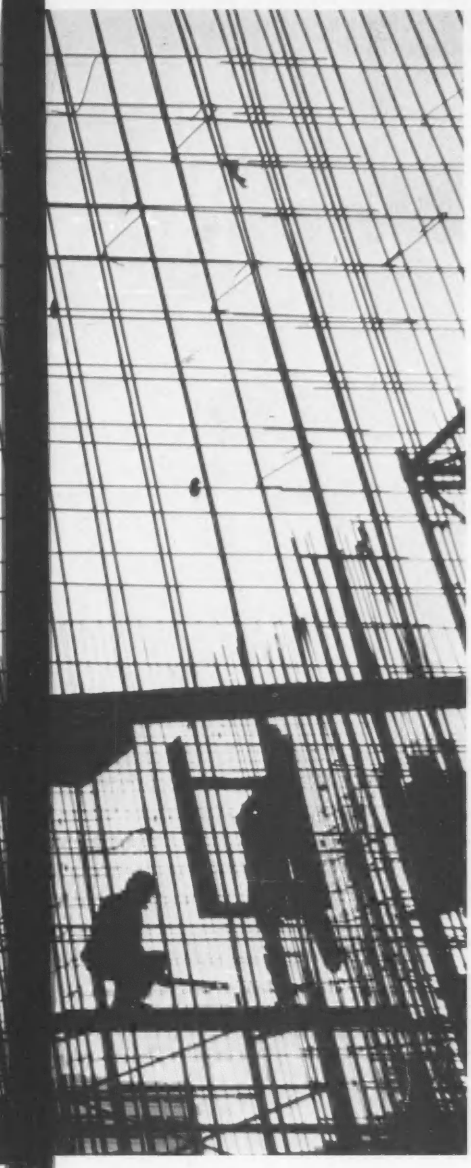
The Gulf States

A delicate balance

by Elisabeth Longuenesse

THE demographic situation in the Gulf States (the six members of the Gulf Co-operation Council— Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, United Arab Emirates, Oman) is unique: in 1980, of a total population of some thirteen million, it was estimated that over four million were foreigners, while of a total working population of some four million three hundred thousand, about two million five hundred thousand were foreign workers.

Whereas in Saudi Arabia, which is the largest of the Gulf States and whose population constitutes two thirds of the total, non-Saudi workers accounted for less than 50 per cent of the total working population in 1980, the proportion of foreigners in the small Gulf Emirates has reached such levels that social and cultural imbalances are getting out of hand. In Qatar 85 per cent and in the United Arab Emirates 90 per cent of workers are foreign and three-quar-



Philippine workers on a construction site in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia.

ters of the total population are non-citizens. In Kuwait over 75 per cent of the workers and nearly 60 per cent of the population are non-Kuwaiti.

The situation in Oman and Bahrain seems to be better balanced. This is because Oman still has a large rural population, whilst there has been a relative decline in immigration to Bahrain, although this trend is now being reversed.

Since the policy of importing labour from abroad is of relatively recent origin, most of these workers are unaccompanied men and this strong male predominance has given rise to a very serious population imbalance. Only in Kuwait and Bahrain, where immigration has a longer history, has a better balance been achieved thanks to the gradual arrival of families and the subsequent creation of families on the spot.

The immigrants can be divided into three main cultural groups: the Europeans, who form a privileged minority and whom we mention only for the record, the Arabs, still by far the most numerous, and the Asians, who have been constantly growing in number since the mid-1970s.

Unlike immigrant workers in Western Europe, those in the Gulf States are to be found in all branches of activity and at all levels of skill. This is true for all nationalities, although the pattern of qualifications is not the same for all of them. The employment of indigenous workers is marginal in virtually all sectors except the administration.

The conditions under which immigration takes place vary considerably. Strictly speaking, the prospective immigrant must have an employment contract before an entry visa can be granted, unless he manages to get a job while visiting relations.

There is, however, a lot of illegal immigration and the status of illegal immigrants is very precarious. They are at the mercy of the expulsion measures which the authorities apply from time to time, but since they provide a margin of flexibility for the labour market they are usually tolerated in practice. Owing to the absence of local manpower, to the obligation for a foreigner to have a work permit before entry, to the fact that foreigners cannot easily change jobs, and to the prohibition on foreigners remaining in the country if they become unemployed, the labour market is extremely rigid.

Apart from illegal immigration there is another practice which helps to ensure a supply of marginal, day-to-day manpower. This consists of the importation of workers, quite legally, by someone who is himself the owner of one or more small businesses. If he succeeds in obtaining entry visas for workers in excess of his own needs, he either throws them on the labour market to fend for themselves or hires them out to other employers on a daily basis, retaining a percentage of their wages for himself.

Foreign workers have no means of organizing to defend their rights. Trade unions are forbidden except in Kuwait and Bahrain where foreigners have the right to join a union after five years with the same employer but are not allowed to take part in elections. So the worker has no recourse against any possible exploitation, particularly since in many instances he will have incurred heavy debts to gain entry into the country in the first place. Even if he obtains regular employment it may be several months before he can save any money to send to his family.

The vast majority of immigrants remain on the fringe of society, housed, at worst, under canvas on the outskirts of towns and, at best, in collective apartments. More often they live crowded into dilapidated

Photo © P. Maréchaux, Paris

This group of four teachers in the courtyard of a Saudi Arabian school comprises an Egyptian, a Jordanian, a Palestinian and a Syrian.

houses in old quarters that have been abandoned by the indigenous inhabitants.

Nearly a third of foreigners resident in Kuwait were born there, but only 16 per cent have been living there for more than ten years, since the majority of the second generation consists of youngsters less than ten years old. Already in 1975, 126,500 of the 234,000 children attending school in Kuwait were foreign. Nevertheless, the existence of a core, albeit still small, of older, well-established immigrants has had an integrating influence on the newer arrivals.

Life is certainly easier for the worker who is accompanied by his family, but he is liable to be more severely affected by any discrimination to which he may be subjected. Certainly, he enjoys some of the advantages of an oil-rich society such as free medical care and free schooling for his children (provided that they were born in Kuwait or their parents have been living there since 1970 and, above all, that they don't fall behind in their studies). However, scarcity of services and the priority given to Kuwaiti citizens often oblige the foreign worker to have recourse to the private sector. In many cases he is saddled with an exorbitant rent while access to subsidized housing or house ownership on easy terms and grants and allowances of various kinds are reserved to citizens who also receive higher wages for similar work.

These frustrations contribute to the building up of a climate of tension which may develop into mutual hostility. Asian immigrants seem to provoke most of the negative reactions, at least in the press which blames them for the growth in the crime rate (not supported by the facts) or which expresses fear of loss of cultural identity should they become numerically predominant. It is true that if immigration from Asia continues, even at a lower rate, the question of integration will eventually be posed in terms of recognizing national "minorities" that will have become majorities. ■

ELISABETH LONGUENESSE, *French sociologist, is a research assistant at the* Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, *in France. She worked for several years at the Centre for Study and Research on the Contemporary Middle East, at Beirut, Lebanon.*

Scandinavia

How to be a good host

by Carolyn Swetland

HOW are migrants adapting to life in the Scandinavian countries? To understand the problems of adaptation that migrants face it might be better to turn the question round and ask: How are Scandinavians adapting to the presence of migrants?

Scandinavians tend to think of migrant workers as being people from Third World countries, whereas in fact migrant workers coming from other Scandinavian countries, Europe and North America are far more numerous.

During the economic upswing in Europe during the 1960s Third World migrant workers were encouraged to come to the Scandinavian countries by open-door governmental policies aided by active labour recruitment by private employers. Many workers came from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, with Pakistanis now forming the largest group (about 7,500).

Just as labour was recruited when it was needed, so its entry was halted when it was not. Norway was the last Scandinavian country to call a halt to immigration (in 1975), but it did so with certain dispensations which permitted free movement of labour within the Scandinavian countries and provided certain special preferential arrangements for North Americans.

Thus, until some five years ago the Third World migrant was perceived as an economic element, but now he has become an ethnic element. Coming from the Third World and still attached to it in the eyes of both officials and the public, he is a "Third World problem" and, in a certain sense, he is supposed to remain one. An Indian immigrant, now a school psychologist, was asked to provide some migrants for a radio programme (the broadcasting station was government owned and controlled). When he suggested himself as one of them he was told: "Not you! You are a successful migrant!"

The ban on Third World immigration and the arrival of wives and children changed the situation. The unaccompanied male worker who, it was assumed, would eventually return home when no longer needed, had become a family man apparently there to stay. This not only affected the structural situation in the Scandinavian countries, but also attitudes towards immigrants.

Structurally the Scandinavian States define the migrant community as an ethnic minority, their culture as a minority culture and their language as a minority language. They have created various institutions exclusively concerned with migrants, such as housing institutions, separate employment offices and separate youth clubs, and subsidized migrants' own organizations as well as mother-tongue and two-culture classes in schools and so on. Under this policy of *cultural pluralism*, as it has come to be called, ethnic differentiation has not only been endorsed, but also encouraged.

Cover of* Immigranten - The Immigrant, *a bilingual (Norwegian-English) quarterly produced and published by the* Immigranten Collective, *Oslo. "Norway is not only for the Norwegians" proclaims the poster carried by the little girl.

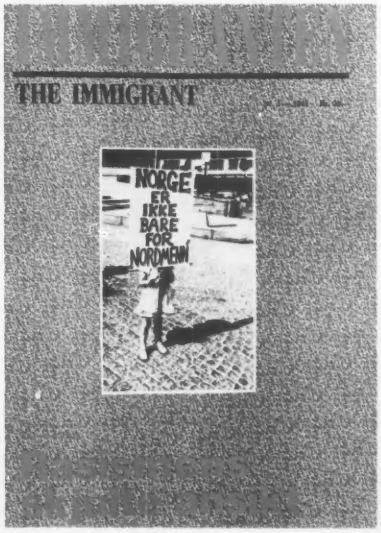


Photo © *Immigranten*, Oslo, Norway

What has been the outcome of this differentiation?

Once the migrant becomes eligible for it, family housing is normally available either in the older sections in the centres of Scandinavian cities or, more recently, in new suburban housing areas in the outskirts. These areas are not limited exclusively to migrants, but in practice a high percentage of migrant families live in them since they are directed there by the housing institutions to which they have to turn for help in finding accommodation. It is not uncommon to find that as much as 85 per cent of the population of these areas consists of immigrants with the remaining 15 per cent being made up of Scandinavians, including a number of Scandinavian girls who have married migrants.

The phrase "once the migrant becomes eligible for it" calls for some explanation. In Norway, for example, there is a curious ruling that an immigrant cannot bring his wife until he has family housing, and he is not eligible for family housing unless his wife is there!

Separate employment offices for migrants result in the sifting and control of re-employment opportunities, job preferences and training programmes. Migrants working on North Sea oil rigs are a special case. Since the rigs are classified as "ships" they are not subject to the labour legislation that prevails on land. Spaniards working on them are often

Photo © *Immigranten*, Oslo, Norway

Immigrant girls in Norway. The first signs of adaptation to a culture which will soon confront their own?

recruited in Rotterdam, taken out directly by boat and never set foot on Norwegian soil. As a result these workers do not figure in Norwegian labour statistics.

State subsidization of migrants' own organizations led to the destruction of the original single-organization system which for a time offered a united front in defence of migrants' interests. In Norway, for example, the plurality of subsidies has resulted in twenty-six separate and distinct Indian organizations receiving State funds for a total Indian population of a little over two thousand. Ethnic youth clubs are also given financial support.

The policy of cultural pluralism may give the impression that all cultures are free to flourish on an equal basis in the Scandinavian countries. But is this the case in the schools?

The debate on the pros and cons of mother-tongue teaching in schools is far from being resolved. Without exception the migrants' own organizations demand mother-tongue teaching. Migrant parents demand proficiency in the language of the host country.

The State and local authorities make proposals that chop and change from year to year. A two-teacher, two-language, two-culture class system is established for grades 1 to 9. Two years later it is restricted to grades 1 to 3. A series of changes and new proposals that were later withdrawn provoked one migrant father, himself a two-culture class teacher, to voice the opinion of many migrant parents when he declared: "We want an end to experimentation in the teaching of migrant children."

Throughout all this the goal presumably remains the same—to educate migrant children in such a way as to place them on an equal footing and to make them competitive with indigenous children when they leave school. However, to be competitive with Scandinavian children the migrant child has to know three languages. Even a Swede, a Dane or a Norwegian has to learn English in addition to his mother tongue if he is to obtain anything other than a menial job. Learning the language of the country in which he lives and works, when that language is itself a minority language, does not take the migrant child very far. It could even be argued that, apart from acquiring a minimum of necessary phrases in the language of the host country, the migrant would do better to become proficient in English.

No matter how well intentioned the thinking behind it may be, cultural pluralism has differentiation as its starting point and defines the migrant on an ethnic-minority basis. And it is the host country that defines what a minority culture is.

Today's man is a migrant. If he is treated as a member of a minority when he arrives in a white industrialized country, it is because he has been ethnically labelled. That he is part of a minority group in a particular host country is one thing. For him to be treated as a member of a minority is another.

The Third World migrant, often a former colonial subject, no longer sees himself as he was taught to, that is to say, with reference to the white industrial world, to the white model. His models are changing. The trouble lies in the fact that the former model seems to be unaware of this change.

A migrant, as opposed to a man who has never moved, is a highly adapted and adaptable person. He has to be. In order to survive he has had to learn the ins and outs of other nations' cultures, languages, income tax and social security systems. The problem of adapting does not rest, and never has rested with the migrant. ■

CAROLYN SWETLAND, *Norwegian anthropologist, is a specialist and lecturer on migration problems. She is the author of several studies and articles including "The Ghetto of the Soul" (Unesco, 1978) and "Migrant Workers, Language and Culture: Ethnolinguistic Models" (Unesco, 1981).*

The psychology of migrant workers

by Ana Vásquez

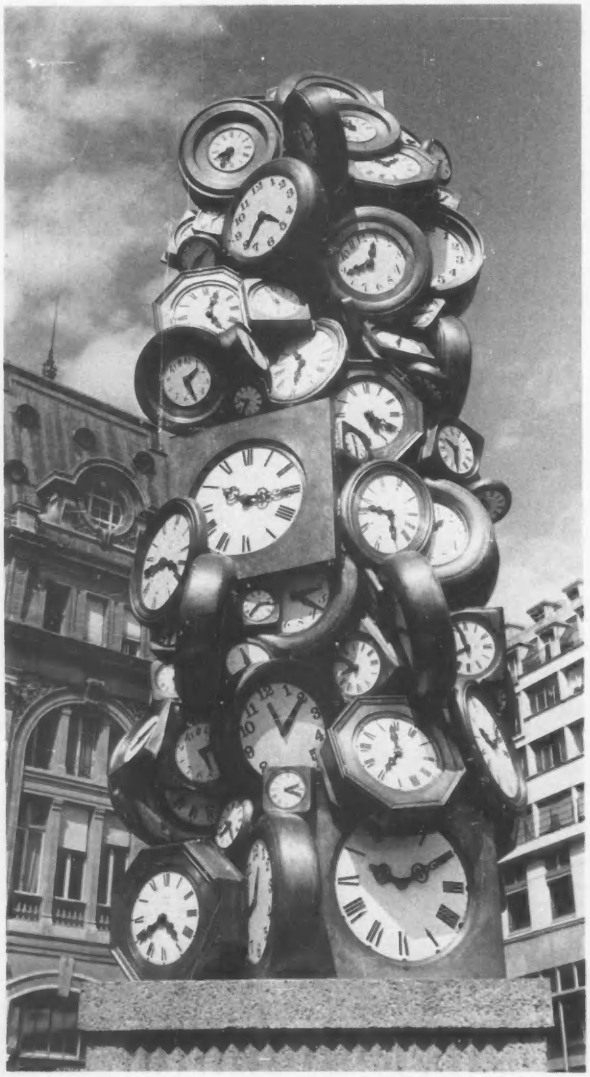
WHAT is there in common between João, who had to leave his wife and children back in Portugal in 1978, and Mohamed, the North African shepherd, who only arrived in Europe a year ago? Does Mirjana, Mohamed's twenty-five-year-old wife, have the same feelings and make the same plans as Maria, who is going on forty? Over and above the raw data of the figures illustrating the trends and scale of the migration problem, what we are interested in finding out is how human beings cope with their transplantation and what upsets it causes.

In the first place it should be remembered that migrants' attitudes, experiences and plans vary from one period to another. For example, they will not have the same outlook if they are only just preparing to leave their own country as they will if they have already spent five or ten years as "foreigners" in another country. Hence, in psychological terms, a distinction can be made between several key stages in the actual experience of migration.

This is the standpoint from which the analysis attempted here has been carried out. It is exclusively concerned with men and women emigrating to Europe. A host of studies have shown that people emigrating to the Americas leave their country of origin for good, whereas those who go to work in the leading industrial countries of Europe visualize their stay as temporary. The migrant's psychological situation differs significantly in these two cases.

It is more harrowing for people to leave their own country when their self-confidence has been undermined by the experiences they have gone through. Migrants leave because they earn a poor living or because they are unemployed. They are accordingly placed in a position where they are dominated, with all the demeaning consequences that implies. Leaving entails a twofold effort. The first is psychological; it entails an effort to overcome loss of self-esteem and to look forward to the prospect

These two recent (1985) works by the French sculptor Arman stand in the forecourt of Paris's Saint-Lazare station and might be seen as a monument to rail transport, but they could also be interpreted as a comment on time-dominated big-city life (left,* L'Heure de Tous, *"Everyone's Time") and on the improbability of escape (right,* Consigne à Vie, *"Left Luggage Office for Life").



Photos © SPADEM, 1985

Photo © *Der Spiegel* No. 30, 1985

Members of a Turkish migrant family browse before an array of TV screens in a store in the Fed. Rep. of Germany.

of vocational training or a job abroad. The second is material and entails finding ways and means of making the journey.

Strongly influenced by the images conveyed by the media and by the stories told by people who have returned home, which always tend to exaggerate the "wonders" of foreign countries, migrants have an idealized picture of the country to which they are so keen to go. The "credibility gap" between the country they dream of and the real-life situation they will find there causes their first traumatic experience. This is compounded not only by their living and working conditions but by their meagre knowledge of the language of the host country, behaviour patterns in large industrial cities, administrative formalities which they do not understand, and even mechanical appliances which they look upon as traps. Above all, however, a traumatic situation is created by the discriminatory, if not overtly racist, attitudes to which they are exposed. As they feel ill at ease and anonymous in an unfamiliar situation which they are unable to control, the view they have of themselves is utterly confused.

Admitting to the resulting disappointment and sense of disarray would be tantamount to acknowledging failure, but that is something the migrants cannot afford, since their only strength lies in their desire to make a success of the plans they have made. In many instances, therefore, they develop defence mechanisms in order to cope more easily with the difficulties confronting them.

Consequently, they withdraw into themselves and into their community, since they only feel at ease among their own people and tend to idealize their country of origin. This is reflected in the importance they attach to certain features that seem to have no bearing on the success or failure of their emigration plans, such as loyalty to their own folk or appreciation of traditional family cooking, or in their readiness to forget the unemployment and poverty in their country of origin.

Migrants also tend to become more fragile and to display somatization patterns; when they are ill, they suffer from a range of symptoms which are difficult to identify and which may even give rise to certain forms of mental pathology.

After a period of time which varies from case to case, the migrants manage to overcome these initial stumbling blocks and embark on a process of transculturation. From the psychological standpoint, the main feature of this stage lies in the conflicts they experience whenever they have to compare their habitual practices, norms and values, in other words their original culture, with those of the host country.

In their country of origin, the extended family and the community deal with many aspects of everyday life which are handled by institutions in the industrial countries. For example, the social security, family allowance and day nursery systems require information that has to be provided on special sheets or forms within prescribed deadlines. This is something foreigners find hard to grasp.

Moreover, urban time and space are also regulated. Even in the places where they live, migrants are subject to constraints which they regard as infringements of their personal freedom. They cannot perform certain religious or family ceremonies such as the "sacrifice of the sheep", because the smell and the noise will inconvenience their neighbours; nor are they allowed to make a noise after certain hours.

The organization of time in industrial cities is particularly demanding: everyday life is compartmentalized, with set times for meals and leisure pursuits, and people have to hurry from place to place. The comments made by migrants point to the difficulties they face in adapting to the new ▶

Photo © Edimedia, Paris

At this spectacular naturalization ceremony at the Hollywood Bowl in 1954, 7,600 people from 68 countries became citizens of the United States.

▶rhythm, as when they claim "The people here rush around all the time, it's exhausting", or "At the factory your every move is watched and you're even timed when you go to the toilet", or else "I am under pressure because you always have to be in a hurry. By the evening, I'm so exhausted that I feel as if I've had all the stuffing knocked out of me".

Social relationships, especially between men and women, are baffling and cause tensions. Gestures that are meant to be polite are taken for impudence, and signs of friendship are misinterpreted. After some bewilderment which prompts them to withdraw into their shells, migrants reach the point where they try to comprehend these behaviour patterns and to compare them with their own. Then they slowly embark on a process of change which eventually comes to affect significant aspects of their personality and cultural identity.

After a while, when they meet newly arrived compatriots, they realize how they have changed when, for example, they feel embarrassed by the newcomers' "noisy behaviour in the street" or by "the way they look at women". But even though the migrants adopt some of the norms of the host country, they are still "out on a limb" as it were, torn between their deep-rooted and unconscious attachment to their native culture, which they do not wish to betray, and their newly acquired outlook, which they feel to be more suited to the continued fulfilment of their plans.

"I should like to open a grocery store in the village, but I haven't managed to save enough money yet. I've been in Paris for fifteen years.... What worries me most is that my son wants to stay here, my daughter would like to go on with her studies... and even my wife is not all that keen on going back." These comments by a migrant worker reflect a situation that has become fairly widespread and arises when, after a period of time, the members of the family start to question the dream of going back home.

The teenagers speak and write badly the language of the country of origin, and have few real ties with the mythical land which is meant to be "home", especially since their friends are "over here". Women— sometimes without even realizing it— find that they enjoy greater social independence. They often dread going back to a situation in which they would again be compelled to live under the thumb of the family.

Such uncertainty can be distressing, for emigrants feel that they have endured all kinds of ordeals because they were going to succeed and return home. Hence, giving up the idea of returning is tantamount to making a far-reaching appraisal of the very meaning of their lives.

They have to ask themselves whether they are going to stay and become integrated. However, in some European countries the adoption of such a course is to some extent a gamble, given the extent of discriminatory and even aggressive reactions towards immigrant workers and their children.

What choice lies open to them? The uncertainties and the issues we have described form the backdrop to the lives of migrants and place them and their children in a kind of nomansland which often prevents them from making and carrying out long-term plans. ■

ANA VASQUEZ, *French psychologist of Chilean origin, is currently engaged in research with the* Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, *in France. She formerly taught educational psychology at the University of Chile and is the author of some 30 studies and articles on the psychological problems of displaced persons and the processes of transculturation.*

Return ticket
The problems of going back

by Eric-Jean Thomas and Catherine Wihtol de Wenden

THE flows of migration to the Western countries which took place after the Second World War, and especially from the 1960s onwards, differed from earlier migratory movements in that they were primarily intended to be temporary.

In the wake of those immigrants who took their families and left their homeland to conquer a new world, the immigrants of the 1960s scarcely entertained the idea of settling in the host country on a permanent basis. Their intention was to find better paid jobs, to put some money aside, and then to go back and turn their savings to good account.

The clampdown on immigration decided by the industrialized countries after the 1973 oil crisis had the unexpected effect of increasing the immigrant population resident in those countries and prolonging their stay. At the same time, there was a significant decline in the number of seasonal returns coinciding with vacation periods.

This paradoxical situation stemmed from the fact that restrictions on immigration initially applied only to the workers themselves who, since they expected more stringent regulations to be introduced, did their utmost to bring their families over to join them. As a result, many migrant workers postponed their return home indefinitely, and, afraid that they might not gain readmittance to the host country, refrained from returning to their country of origin even for a temporary visit.

For example, between 1974 and 1982, an estimated 100,000 Portuguese returned home, whereas some 200,000 emigrated during the same period. The same phenomenon also occurred in other sending countries with different economic structures, such as Finland, where the number of returns home fell by 7 per cent in 1982. A study on Turkey carried out in 1980 showed that the return phenomenon had been reduced to a mere trickle.

For this reason, some European receiving countries, including France and the Federal Republic of Germany, have attempted in the last decade to introduce policies aimed at encouraging immigrants to return home. These policies raise questions of principle which were irrelevant in the liberal climate of international migrations which still prevailed at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The idea that States had the right to encourage immigrant workers to return to their countries of origin in a situation where labour was surplus to requirements slowly emerged between the two World Wars. Today, no European State can take peremptory measures for the collective expulsion of migrants. It is widely accepted that the loss of residence entitlement, which entails the loss of acquired social benefits, should give rise to compensation.

As a result, there has been a gradual recognition of a right associated with the return process, which is no longer rejected either by immigrants or by the trade unions, which are now more concerned with negotiating the amount of compensation to be paid. In a context of economic crisis, workers who are nationals of the host country sometimes protest against the discriminatory nature of such a right which does not apply to them and which gives them the impression that immigrants are favoured when it comes to leaving their jobs.

This thinking about the return process gradually began to spread in the receiving countries when they closed their frontiers to foreign workers. In a sense it was because immigrants were no longer leaving that the host countries "invented" the idea of giving them money to encourage them to return to their own countries.

The fact is that policies to incite immigrants to return raise questions of legality both for the countries which carry them out and, increasingly, for the countries of origin. In the host countries, providing assistance for return to the countries of origin is theoretically supposed to reassure public opinion which is anxious about the immigrant problem, but in practice it is a costly, not very effective, and sometimes even damaging exercise. It may well be asked what purpose it serves, apart from having symbolic implications and serving as a bargaining counter between the States concerned.

To what extent does the return of the migrants benefit the countries from which they emigrated? In fact, although their return may appear, at first sight, to be an advantage for the country of origin, a number of recent studies have shown that this is by no means always the case.

In terms of vocational training, the marginal status of foreign workers in the host country is little incentive for them to improve their qualifications. The governments of the host countries have clearly recognized this, since those which attempt ▶

Photo Charlesworth, International Labour Office.

Egyptian migrant workers returning home after two years in Iraq

Photo Bouwens van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam © ADAGP 1985

This work by the Belgian artist René Magritte (La Maison de Verre, 1939) could be seen as the depiction of a man eternally looking back to his past or dreaming of a return to his homeland.

▶ to promote the return of immigrants have introduced a variety of measures to improve the job qualifications of would-be returnees in line with the requirements of the countries of origin.

However, these intentions are not always easy to fulfil, especially since the immigrant workers are reluctant to take time off work for vocational training, thereby foregoing immediate financial gain. The problem is further compounded by the fact that most of the prospective returnees are unskilled workers.

Lastly, it must be stressed that on-the-job training in factories and other workplaces is primarily geared to the needs of the industrial society of the host country and will be of little value to the country of origin.

In terms of financial input to their country of origin, regardless of whether the immigrants return as "failures" or "successes", they will try to acquire a social and economic status higher than that they enjoyed when they left. The vast majority of the "returnees" aspire to be self-employed and put their savings into those sectors of the economy in which they are most likely to achieve this status.

In agriculture, unless they have a well-thought-out plan, they often use their savings to purchase more or less unproductive land and equipment that cannot be easily serviced.

The purchase or construction of a house is one of the main purposes for which they use their savings. However, such an investment can hardly be said to be productive and may entail a high social cost in urban areas.

The tertiary sector of the economy, especially small independent businesses, is the big magnet for their savings. Such small businesses, of which one-man taxi services are typical, are notoriously unproductive and are liable to have parasitic effects on the economy of the country of return.

Lastly, savings are often channelled into the purchase of consumer goods. As a rule this has an adverse effect on the economy in that it stimulates domestic demand for imported goods.

Studies carried out so far do not suggest that any change in social and political attitudes is intrinsic to the migration process. For if emigration gives rise to specific political or family behaviour patterns different from those of the country of origin, considerable caution must be exercised before concluding that such patterns will survive after the migrants have returned home.

Finally, it must be emphasized, firstly, that the percentage of immigrants returning home is extremely small and that until recently the countries of origin displayed little interest in the problem. Secondly, although the structural effects of the return of immigrants are by no means clearly grasped, they are limited and, in general, have a disturbing impact on the economy of the home country. Thirdly, it is becoming clear that policies to encourage migrants to return can only be put into effect by the host countries as a result of far-reaching concerted action with the countries of origin.

The return of immigrants can only become a reality and be a source of profit to the emigration countries if negotiations, which will have to be bilateral, at least in the early stages, lead in the long run to concerted action between these countries and the immigration countries. ■

ERIC-JEAN THOMAS, *of France, is a lawyer with the Paris Court of Appeal and teaches at the University of Paris. He is the author of many studies on the legal aspects of migration. He was director of a comparative study entitled* Immigrant Workers in Europe: their Legal Status, *published by Unesco in 1982.*

CATHERINE WIHTOL DE WENDEN, *of France, is engaged in research with the* Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique *and is a consultant with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). She has published many articles on the political aspects of migration, including a work entitled* Les Immigrés dans la Cité *(1978).*

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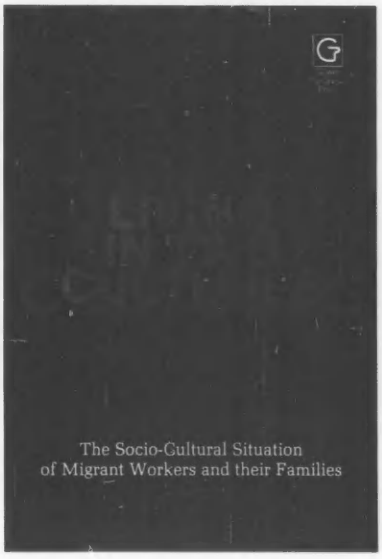
Two Unesco books on migrant workers



Living in two cultures presents a collection of studies on the social and cultural situation of immigrants in Europe and the United States. The first part is concerned with the conditions, nature and effects of official language training programmes for migrant workers and their families. The second part addresses the particular problems faced by female migrants and how the characteristics of the old culture affect their adaptation to the requirements of the new.

1982 325 pages 140 French francs
ISBN 92-3-1018669-8

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Immigrant workers in Europe: their legal status shows how the status of immigrant workers is determined with reference to the economic, political and social conditions peculiar to each host country and, particularly, how the legal machinery controlling immigration affects the future of migrants. Chapters discuss the specific situation in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden and Turkey.

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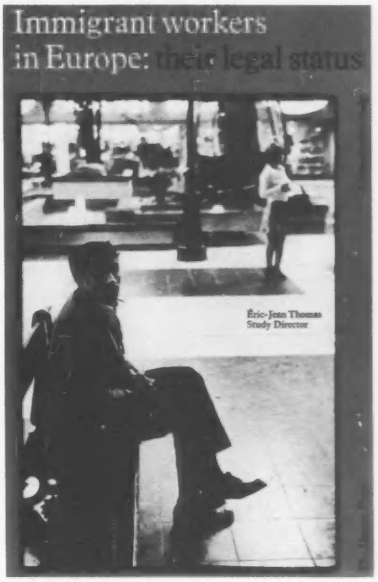

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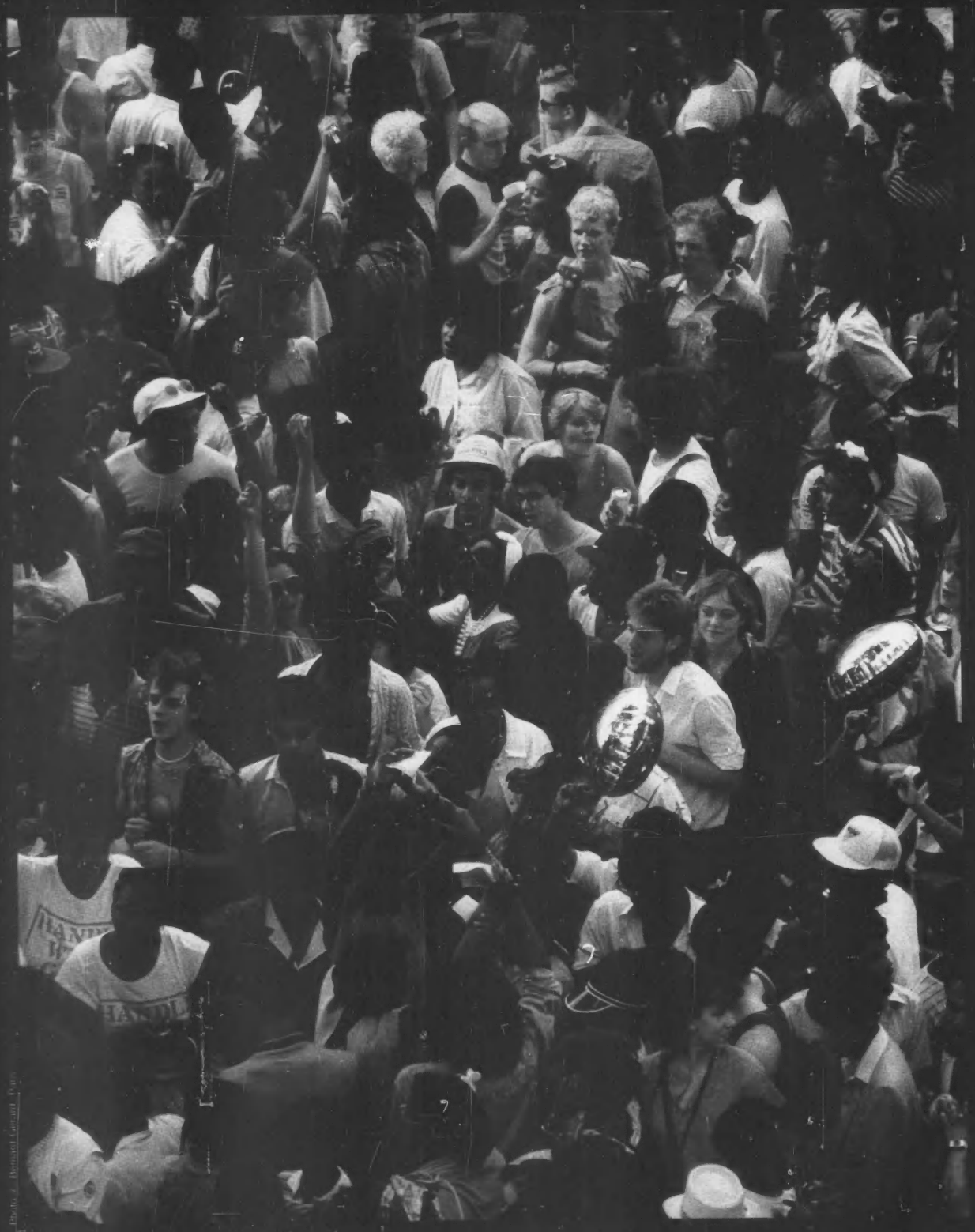

Photo © Bernard Gerard, Paris

Twenty million migrant workers

Estimates of the number of migrants in the world vary widely, partly because of the difficulty of obtaining reliable statistics from some areas and partly because of discrepancies in the definition of migrants. Leaving aside refugees, tourists, pilgrims and nomads, the major distinguishing feature of migrants is that they move to a country of which they are not nationals for the purpose of employment. On the basis of the definition of migrants as "persons not possessing the citizenship of their country of employment", the International Labour Office estimates the number of economically active migrants in today's world as at least 19.7 to 21.7 million. Above, a cosmopolitan scene at the Notting Hill carnival, London.